

New Studies

... in ...

**The Beatitudes and
The Lord's Prayer**

W. R. BENEDICT.

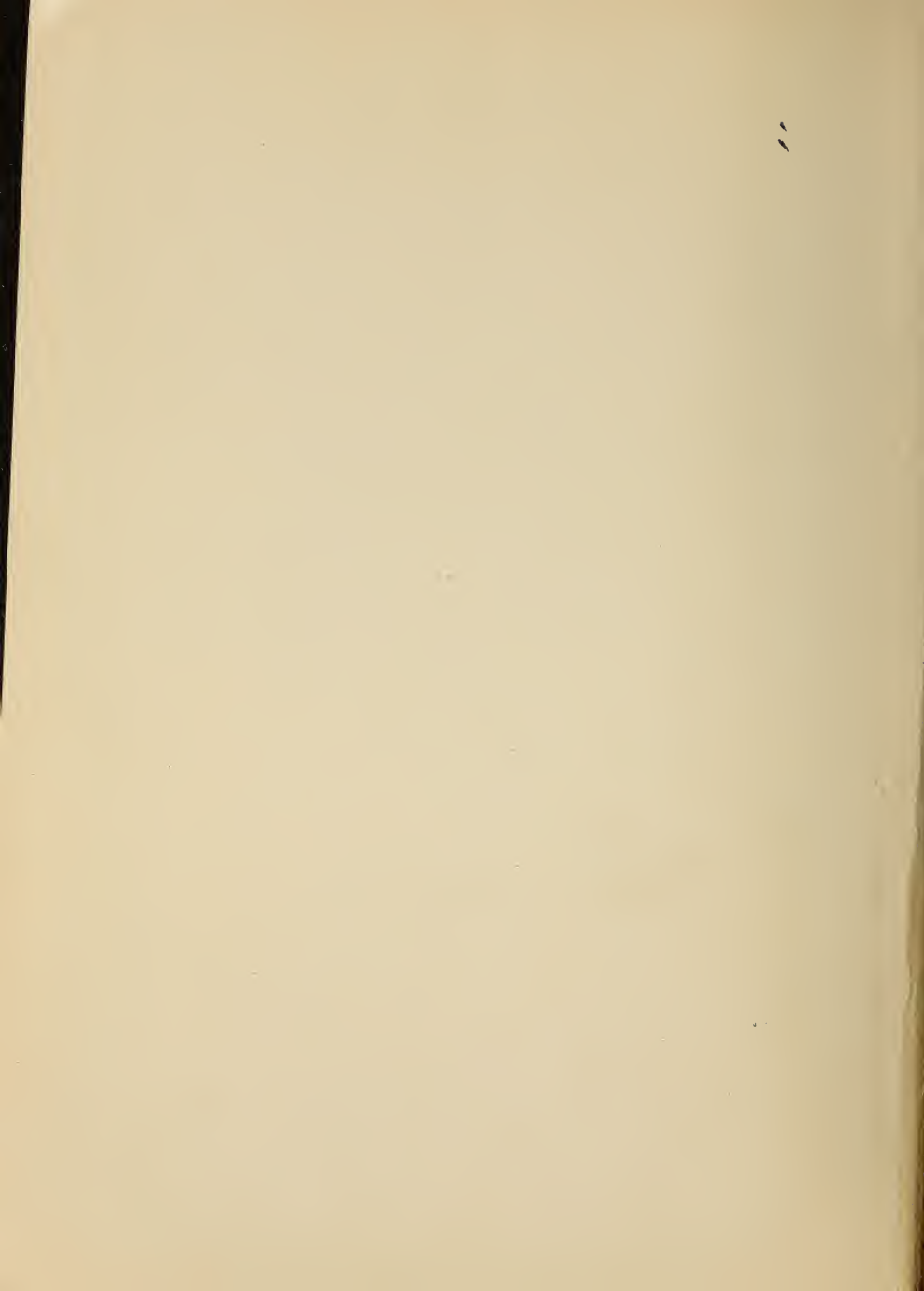
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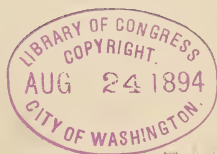
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The Beatitudes and The Lord's Prayer.



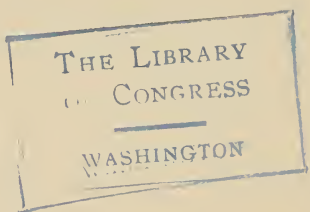
LECTURES DELIVERED BY
PROFESSOR W. R. ^{ayland}BENEDICT,
"Richardson"

At the University of Cincinnati, during the Winter of
1893-1894.

1894

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IN keeping with the will of Charles McMicken, the founder of the University of Cincinnati, the Protestant version of the Bible has been used as a book of instruction in the institution since the year 1880.

Attendance on the Bible study has been voluntary, and the hour at which it was held was declared vacant of other university exercises.

It may interest the friends of the Bible and of the university to know that large numbers of students have availed themselves of the opportunity offered for a serious and reverent consideration of religious teaching as presented in the Scriptures.


During the Winter of 1893-1894 this Bible study was opened to the public, and many citizens attended the instruction throughout its entire course, the class itself numbering over seventy students.

At the special request of these students, and by their generous aid, as well as that of many friends of the institution, the lectures on the Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer are now presented in more permanent form.

Since publication was not contemplated when these lectures were written, it is hoped that their personal and somewhat familiar manner of address will be pardoned.

W. R. BENEDICT.

INTRODUCTORY.

EASON should be used in the study of all subjects whatsoever. During years of service as instructor I have come in contact with hundreds of students, and the constitution of my classes assures me that had reason been denied her rights I would have been left with the benches. I have urged the exercise of reason, have pled for it and labored for it without ceasing, therefore I hesitate not to say that there are better things than reason.

The glory of man is not his reason, but his feeling. It is better to love and worship and pray than to reason, it is better to pity than to syllogize, to be sincere than to think.

Consider the application.

Religion, the religion of the Bible, of the Sermon on the Mount, is concerned primarily with these better things than reason. The Bible enjoins love to God and man as our supreme duty—love is a feeling. The Sermon speaks of hunger and thirst after righteousness, of mercy, of peace; these also are feelings.

If the Bible and reason conflict, which should go to the wall? How ought this question to be answered by one who continually advocates the use of reason,

and at the same time believes there are truths higher than those of reason? Should not the answer be "Seek first the Kingdom of God," be not *chiefly* concerned to find inconsistencies and irrationalities in the Bible, search, rather, for those religious truths which may be found from the prayer of Moses to the last chapter of Revelation. If there be one subject more than another in the study of which it becomes the student to know that his reason is the right reason, that subject is religion. It is not far from an audacious thing for a student to assert that his reason crowds the Bible to the wall. There is a further and serious consideration.

For many persons, especially in their earlier years, the Bible means only certain views of inspiration, of atonement, of justification by faith. Bid them push the Bible to the wall at the command of reason, and they will turn away forever from the noblest truths in the possession of man; they will cease to pray, and remain disciples of a dreary and lifeless culture. Let a young man or young woman *desire* first of all the Kingdom of God—that is, the reign of one whose authority rests on His excellence alone—and the logical fallacy will never be committed of taking a part for the whole, or of confounding religion with dogma.

Is it not true that the best thing about a human being is *justified* feeling? Such feeling leads to action, and so does good continually. Justified feeling is produced by *facts*, and facts are secured by search, by intellectual endeavor, by the use of reason. Does not this place *all* in the hands of reason? No, and in no

sense. It gives to reason its proper and subordinate place as the servant of feeling, whose duty it is to work always in the higher cause of love, purity, righteousness, peace.

In our present Bible studies there is need of a double charity. We will suppose that your neighbor believes in the literal, verbal inspiration of the Bible, while you consider this an extreme and untenable view. Further, we will suppose that, by pressing your liberalism upon him, you cause him to go astray. You regard yourself as the more enlightened nature of the two; is not your duty plain? Let us suppose, on the other hand, that your neighbor is "a liberal" and that you recognize in him a sincere, conscientious man. He does not accept the inspiration of the Bible, he does not believe in the Kingdom of Heaven or in the existence of God. Will you respect him in his unbelief as he shall respect you in your belief? Whether we please or no, this method of a double charity is forced upon us all.

Christian parents of fifty years of age have children in colleges and universities who are confronted with ideas and with facts to support them that were nowhere to be found when these parents attended school. Magazine literature has increased beyond estimate in the last twenty-five years, and this literature is filled with the new facts and instinct with the modern method. From these facts and this method, young men and women can not be excluded. Not only so, students of both sexes in our higher institutions of learning, students who have left devoutly religious homes, treat the Bible as an uninspired book, as a book

with purely human origin and history. They find in it statements that seem to them incredible, and they reject these statements; they find what they regard as inconsistencies in the record, and reject the record. What are those to do who believe that there is saving, religious, truth in the Bible? What are they to do who believe the Bible is the articulate, syllabled, voice of God to men.

Shall they say to these students you are of a reprobate mind; your hearts are being hardened against the day of wrath; you must believe or be damned? But some of these young men and women are sincere—sincere to the core—they will believe if they can, and they will not if they can not. Has the christian religion nothing to offer but the doctrine of inspiration—the doctrine of atonement—the doctrine of justification by faith. Observe, I am not calling one of these doctrines in question, neither am I asking a believer in them to abandon one iota of what he considers their divine reality. I am saying, my friend—oh, my friend—there is more in religion than you know. Have the courage of your faith. Come out from the creed to the living reality which gave that creed its form. Do you believe in God? Of what, then, are you afraid? Are there no facts with which to meet the sincere young men and women who will have a standing-ground in their own experience for whatever faith shall at any time come to be in them?

But I have asked a double charity. I have asked the "liberal" to be liberal and the skeptic to be a man—a *man*, for he who *loves* to be a skeptic is either

fool or devil. Let the skeptic, therefore, say: "I am what I am, in spite of myself. I would I could believe this world to be God's world—the world of a holy, loving intelligence. Intelligence, holiness, love are higher than the forces of matter. This is a better world, regarded as God's world than regarded as the world of brute force. I have not outgrown the grandeur and the beauty of the idea of God. I am not ashamed of that idea. I know that the deepest things within me are my affections, and that no affection is as deep as the affection for a holy intelligence. I will pledge you the charity of a true liberal in these bible-studies. I will put off my sneer; I will untwist the curl in my lip; I will bow down my soul before any truth, any reality you may have to show me." Is there a student in this University who dare not take such a position. Is there a student in this University who has committed himself so often to the statement that the Bible is outgrown and religion a sham, that he dare not, dare not, I say, use his reason with me in studying the words of the Bible. God forbid, or all true beings forbid, if you have no God. For these reasons I entreat all my hearers, as sincere searchers after truth, to determine with me whether there are any *facts* in our daily experience which confirm the Bible utterances we are to examine.

There are many questions connected with a detailed study of the Sermon on the Mount, which, though interesting and instructive, I put entirely aside for matters of larger importance. I will illustrate my meaning. The beginning of this discourse is as fol-

lows: "And, seeing the multitudes, He went up into the mountain." I might call your attention to the Greek here, εἰς τὸ ὄρος, and emphasize the significance of the article τὸ into *the* mountain, that is, a mountain in the neighborhood, or a mountain well known, from the fact of this discourse having been delivered upon it. I might say to you that one of the commentators has gotten out of the word ὄρος, mountain, the picturesque fact that Matthew wished to place this Sermon on the Mount in contrast with the Decalogue sermon on Mt. Sinai.

A part of the second verse of our chapter reads: "And He opened His mouth and taught them"—"ἀνοίξας τὸ στόμα." I might quote Luther, and say that this phrase, "He opened His mouth," was designed to show the earnestness, seriousness of the speaker. As Luther says: "It is the duty of every preacher that he should open his mouth—not be silent, not mumble, but out with it—hit whom he may." I might occupy very much time in comparing Luke's more fragmentary account of this discourse with the account given by Matthew, and thereby spend further effort on this word mountain. I might call your attention to the tradition which has chosen the hill known as the Horns of Hattin, two horn-like heights, rising sixty feet above the plain between them—two hours west of Tiberias. I might quote Dean Stanley in favor of this tradition (Sinai and Palestine, 360), or I might quote Paulus as in favor of a hill near Safed, or I might reconcile Luke, who says that Jesus, before speaking, came down with His disciples and stood on

a level place, with Matthew, who says that He went up into a mountain and sat down. I might, I say, reconcile these tremendous discrepancies by saying, with Bengel, that on the mountain, a lower one than that on which Jesus had been previously, there was a plateau or level place, so that He could be in a mountain and on a level place at the same time.

The entire Sermon on the Mount is susceptible of this treatment. Consider the number of commentators who have written on the New Testament; consider also that each one of these commentators is under contract to do "original work," and I think you will see that disagreement is likely to prevail, and that each student will put that commentary under his arm which most harmonizes with his preconceived opinion or his unconscious leanings.

I put aside two other matters also in our study of this discourse—and they are, first, an attempt to know exactly what was in the mind of Christ as He spoke these words; and, second, all estimate of the sermon as Jewish, as pre-Christian. If you wish to know exactly what Jesus meant, read the commentators—one will tell you He meant exactly this; the other, that He meant exactly the opposite.

It is not my purpose to examine the views of those who maintain that all Jesus contemplated by the sermon was to spiritualize the Mosaic Law, that He was gradually forced by His disciples and servants to put Himself forward as the Messiah, that the distinctive doctrines of the church, such as the atonement, justification by faith, election, came at a later time through

Paul. One thing seems clear—the Sermon on the Mount has meant less to the Christian world than it ought to have meant, and it is justly said that this is chiefly due to the absence in the sermon of those doctrines named above.

Let us put to the Christian world this question: Have you any other object in view than the salvation of men; the rescue of men from their sins? Do you not believe and teach that for this end Jesus Christ lived and died? Do you not believe and teach that salvation means the becoming better on the part of the sinner, that salvation is the restoration of man to God-likeness? Do you believe or teach that God can take the vile to Himself? Do you not believe and teach that a man must be *regenerate*, a new man, before God can receive him? These are the professed beliefs of Christendom, and they will serve to make plain what it is that we now seek from the Sermon on the Mount. Are there realities in this sermon, which, like the heard voice of God, will help us to become better—not more learned, not more reputed—but better?

You will readily gather from what has been said that we propose to do an audacious thing, viz., to step aside from the commentaries and state what we find and do not find in this discourse, as it lies before us in the gospel of Matthew. And, first, looking at the discourse as a whole, we see that it presents the blessings and the duties belonging to all citizens of the kingdom of heaven. We find that the atmosphere of the discourse is what may be called consoling, enlivening, inviting—that it is breathed around

the disciples of Christ, that it carries with it an invitation to all to enter this discipleship. We find then two central ideas in the Sermon on the Mount—the blessings and the duties of heavenly citizens. It should be remarked that those theologians or others, who, believing this sermon to be the word of God, separate it from Christianity as belonging to the old Jewish dispensation, are making a most fatal mistake. Either there is a kingdom of heaven or there is not—either the citizens of this kingdom are such as Christ declares them in this sermon, or they are not. If they are, then what is called Christianity has no other design than to make such heavenly citizens. It all comes back to this—do we believe the Old Testament to contain the word of God, the law of God? Do we believe that if men had kept this law in spirit as in letter, they would have needed no Savior? If so, this Sermon on the Mount, as a spiritualizing of God's Law, is a true presentation of the blessings and duties of heavenly citizenship; and the death of Christ, with all the doctrines thereunto attaching, have no other purpose than to make men into such characters as belong necessarily to citizens of the kingdom of heaven. It follows that a Christian man to-day, in this city, in this room, who professes himself saved by the blood of Christ from everlasting death, should compare his daily life with the life of the heavenly citizens, as depicted in this sermon, that he may learn whether he is being saved.

The Sermon on the Mount, as we have said, presents the blessings and the duties belonging to all citizens of the heavenly kingdom.

Now, it would doubtless be claimed by many that this discourse is the inspired word of God, and that *therefore* we are to believe in the existence of a kingdom of heaven and prepare for it accordingly.

On the other hand, many might invite us to consider what modern biblical scholarship has to say respecting the development of the idea of a heavenly kingdom among the Jewish people. What is regarded as evidence might be submitted, tending to show that this people, in its beginnings, was entirely without the lofty spiritual conceptions which it subsequently displayed, and which made it forever a marked and separate people.

Further, the views of those sincere students might be considered who believe they find in the recorded life of Christ indications that his own conception changed, passing from a narrower, more literal, idea of a Messianic kingdom to a somewhat larger view—a view afterward further broadened by Paul, transforming the Jewish religion into a world religion. In this immediate connection it were possible to compare the central ideas of world religions, and to point out in what respects the Christian idea seems a later and higher form of the religious consciousness.

These possible lines of inquiry are named for the purpose of making more clear, by contrast, the exact purpose of our present study.

We seek to test certain Bible statements by facts of our experience, and the immediate inquiry, therefore, is, are there any facts which point to a kingdom of heaven as the religious solution of the mystery of

existence. If we find such facts we shall have little difficulty in seeing that Christ's portraiture of the heavenly citizen is abidingly correct.

Consider the following fact: We exist and we are finite. We live and are limited. Earthly life is experimentally, for most human beings, a very imperfect and unsatisfactory affair. Theoretically, this earthly life is for many thinkers a suffering imperfection that ends at the grave. It is to be admitted that a limited, suffering, existence does not seem a promising fact from which to reach God and a heavenly kingdom.

Yet this fact is, I doubt not, a chief source of the idea of the infinite which we find within us. If the finite were enough we should never have had the idea of the infinite. The finite *as* finite, *because* finite, suggests the infinite. Note a second fact: We are finite beings conscious of the infinite. I am glad to say that this second fact is not disputed by any one, however differently the fact be interpreted. Imperfection suggests perfection—the limited—an unlimited—a fragmentary development through pain a progressive development without pain. Earth suggests heaven. Respecting the value of this fact I shall speak later. I am now concerned to point it out and at the same time to show how it has been naturally, yet utterly abused. Because the finite existence of man is so bad, so imperfect, so painful a thing, he regards the infinite as whatever the finite is not. Heaven is the direct opposite of earth; God the direct opposite of man; eternity the opposite of time, the

kingdom of heaven a collection of negations. I say this is a natural outcome of so troubled and finite an existence as ours. Yet it would be difficult to find worse reasoning. Suppose a child who is learning to walk and to speak were to conclude, from his tumbles and mistakes, respecting the estate of man, that it contained no walking and no speaking. This conception of the infinite as contra-finite, is one of the most serious misreasonings that has ever afflicted the human mind. So far as christianity is concerned, it has been the source of that unnatural, unmanly, presentation of Deity, which made atheists wherever it appeared.

Return we to our fact, a finite troubled existence, a source of a consciousness of an infinite, untroubled existence.

What is done with this fact in our day and generation? It is brought under the grip of law, and thereby disposed of as an evolution. Physical science explains the consciousness of the infinite as it does everything else by matter and motion. The highest is explained by the lowest; the last by the first; the rose by the roots. We hear constantly of the universal reign of causation — and upon inquiry this causation turns out to mean the finite causation of observed antecedent and consequent. I wish now to call attention to two matters of fact, that is of experience, and to emphasize them fully. The first fact is that there are *qualitative* differences in this universe which thrust themselves upon us and persist in the face of all we can do to resolve them — these qualitative differ-

ences are called living matter or life, and consciousness. Now, what account could science give of the phenomena of biology if it confined itself to matter and motion? It is obliged to study the phenomena of life in living matter and organisms. There is absolutely no such thing as gaining the slightest conception of biological manifestations by a study of matter and motion. You can not find the rationale of a human body by dissecting a corpse, you find it only in the living, moving structure. What is true in biology is even more strikingly true in psychology or an account of consciousness. Nerve matter in motion is not consciousness and a million years examination of it as moving would not disclose a single state of consciousness. Consciousness is known only through consciousness, and understood only through consciousness. What does this mean? it means that principles explanatory of the lower phenomena fail entirely when applied to the higher. And this carries with it the second fact above mentioned. We recognize a higher and a lower in the phenomena of the universe. Living matter is more than dead matter, and consciousness than either. Consciousness is the greatest reality any where within the circle of our experience. Suspend your consciousness and every thing has ceased to be for you. Is it not for the sake of your consciousness that you do all you do? Your plans and your hopes; your joys and your sorrows; your trials; your defeats and your victories, what are they? Matter and motion? Are they explainable in terms of matter and motion, even though you know that without the movements of nerve matter

you would not have had them? Are they accounted for by the brain? Is not rather the brain accounted for by them? Are not they the cause—the reason—the wherefore of the brain? To him who says the brain explains consciousness, let me reply not so; consciousness explains the brain. Are we not reading the universe from the wrong end? We think to explain the man by the child, and often we regret our inability to know the first consciousness. Would that vague, elementary state explain the man; would the man be there or be seen to be there; would the slightest suspicion dawn upon us of the divine consciousness that should afterward appear? Where then is the explanation of man? Is it in those rudimentary organic sensations, whose only distinctions are hunger and thirst? No; it is in his reason, his conscience, his will. Go back to the beginning of these as finite appearances in finite time; trace the development itself. What explains it, the *development* or the *developed*? You see the kind of reason for which our reason calls. The universe is a living, inter-blending whole. There are nowhere in it such separations as the scientist continually feigns and is obliged to feign, if he would study the small fragment which falls under his examination. When he studies matter in motion, he is purposely leaving out of account the greater facts of life and consciousness. Contemplate a human being in his best estate. We have first of all that most wonderful affair, the human body with its multiplicity of organs and parts working harmoniously to one physical end—the nourishment of the brain.

This brain well nourished is the occasion of a vigorous and well-balanced consciousness. Sensations are quick and clear, recollections prompt and reliable, thinking spontaneous, orderly and just. What is the reason—the explanation of this human being? But there is more. His best estate has not been named. The body for the brain, the brain for consciousness and consciousness for conscience. This man at his best estate loves truth—is sincere, is pure. Now seek his meaning in this universe, and where is it to be found? In matter and motion? The grandest reality we know by sight or sound or inner consciousness is a man whole in body, true in mind and pure in heart.”

“Space comprehends and swallows me up like a point; but by thought I comprehend it. Man is but a reed, the weakest thing in nature, but he is a thinking reed. It is not needful that the universe should arm itself to crush him. A breath of vapor, a drop of water is enough to kill him. But even if the universe were to crush him man would be more noble than that which slays him, because he knows that he dies.”

We have now to consider the opposing conclusions that are drawn from the facts previously stated, and to approve or reject in keeping with our best reason.

These conclusions divide into two great classes, the non-religious and the religious. There are thoughtful, earnest minds who, admitting the facts I have named, do not regard them as evidences of God or of a heavenly kingdom. The chief reason for this conclusion is to be found in the method and the achievements of modern science. Science has proclaimed the uni-

versal reign of causation, and has then committed the serious mistake of supposing that this means the universal reign of *one kind* of causation. What I now have to say, respecting the method and conclusions of scientists, I say entirely on their authority.

They claim, and most justly, to have made advances by specialization. They have taken some one fragment of nature and put all their strength upon it, as though it were alone in the universe. This is simply what we find going on everywhere — division of labor. Whatever has been learned respecting the world in which we live, has been gained by dividing the army of searchers into small groups, and confining each group directly to its own small territory.

The advantage and the disadvantage, the gain and the loss of this method can not fail to be seen. The advantage is that you can take up one thing, as a nerve fiber or a nerve cell, and look at it alone. The gain is exactness and minuteness of knowledge. The disadvantage is that that at which you look is torn out of its relations and dead. The loss is in missing the real, full meaning of the little particle you study.

That what I say is true appears beyond question, when we consider what has come to be the general conclusion of scientists, as expressed by the army of special workers. We are told that there are no miracles. Each student finds everywhere an unbroken regularity in the workings of those things he studies. The same yesterday, to-day and forever. And so there has come about an absolutely unconquerable belief that there never has been and can

never be a break in nature's working. Jonah was not swallowed by a large fish, the dead were never raised. And here again, as I think, christianity has failed to recognize its strenth or to use its most stupendous fact. Christianity has been ready to stand or fall with the miracle of Jonah or the resurrection of Lazarus. Christianity has no need of those miracles, when there are greater ones taking place every hour of every day ; when existence, life, consciousness are wonders before which the resurrection of Lazarus is as nothing — wonders which this very same physical science of which I speak is making clearer every day. The more you know about the nerve cell and the nerve fiber, the more profoundly mysterious, miraculous does it become that they should be related to our cousciousness. Consider these statements. It requires six hundred and sixty-seven billion vibrations of ether each second affecting the retina of the eye, and so exciting the brain cells to give you the color violet. At the command of Christ, Lazarus, who had been three days dead, came forth from the tomb. Which miracle is the greater? But you say one is a fact, the other a miracle. Not so. They are both miracles. Science can explain the resurrection of Lazarus as easily as it can the miracle of violet. But you say Lazarus did not rise from the dead. That would have been contrary to natural law. Oh, pitiable weakness. The consciousness of color arose from the dead. The living glorious consciousness of violet arose from the dead vibrations of ether. And physical science has only made the rock-hewn tomb the clearer and

the grave clothes more apparent. The more we know, the more we touch the awful mystery of existence. The child laughs and plays and understands it all. "How do I see?" "Why, I just open my eyes." "How do I hear?" "Why, I just listen." It is the man who knows who shudders before what he does not know.

Let then each scientist write in large and iron letters over the door of his special laboratory the word law; there will glow beneath it and through it more plain than ever the word miracle. But the scientists have not only forgotten that their word law is but a shorter and intenser way of spelling miracle, they have committed a serious error of interpretation. They have explained the higher by the lower; they have not only said everything is caused, they have said everything is caused by matter and motion. And here come those in protest who draw a religious conclusion from the facts of our daily experience. That man, a finite creature, finds within himself the thought of an infinite, is because he is more than finite—that he *thinks* God is because he is in the image of God. Religion and a kingdom of heaven are the truest, most real explanations of this world and of man. I wish I could impart to you the fullness of their belief who draw the religious conclusion from the facts of our daily life. They look with pity, and sometimes I fear with contempt, upon students of this world who find, as its sole reason, cause, solution — blind mechanism. They see all things in God because they find within themselves life consciousness and duty. No

chemical analysis of the soil, no microscopic examination of the roots explains the plant. The flower explains the plant. Man is not explained by the anatomy or physiology of his body or the workings of his brain, but by his aspirations, his love, his resolute will. These men of whom I speak read the world from above — not from below, and why are they not right? They *are* right, or there is no reason in the universe or for the universe. It should be carefully noted that those who conclude in this wise from the facts of life do not conclude to a negative or empty religion. Their infinite being is not the opposite of man — their heaven not the opposite of earth. Turn this world — this present so-called finite world into a kingdom of heaven — and who would wish to leave it? And this very present world would become a heavenly kingdom if we were heavenly citizens.

I have endeavored to show that a kingdom of heaven best explains the kingdom of earth — that the finite has its presupposition and reason in the infinite that man is best understood through God. You will have recognized, running through all my presentation, the conception of the heavenly kingdom as a continuation of all we know to be best and highest in this earthly kingdom. I have selected the most significant facts in our experiences, and found their deepest meaning to be in their continuance, their ultimate triumph and their endless unfolding. I have sought to show that neither our religion nor our reason introduces a break or antagonism between the natural and the supernatural — earth and heaven — man and God. It is not

possible for us to have a larger, more fruitful conception than that of a kingdom of heaven — a kingdom where all are as they ought to be and all things work together for good. It is a delight to contemplate such a kingdom. I have seen persons stand before the Sistine Madonna as before a sacrament. I have known them to be refined and elevated by such contemplation. The kingdom of heaven is our divinest picture, and though any man believe or fear it will turn out but a picture of the imagination, let him contemplate and adore it. He will be the happier and the better — and the time may come when the fact that he could conceive such a kingdom, and himself in part realize it from day to day, shall be the saving proof of its reality.

What a blessing and refreshment to turn to the contemplation of the heavenly kingdom. It is like coming in from the night and the storm to the light and the peace of home.

I have seen men, rude peasant men, remove their hats and bow their heads before the mother and the child in the beautiful room at Dresden.

Would it not be well for us to come before the divine picture of a heavenly kingdom with uncovered heads? You feel my meaning. Put off self-seeking, jealousy, bitterness — the plannings and contrivings that keep us always in turmoil and distress. You know that it will do us good to leave behind these garments of our baser selves, and draw near the holiest thing we have on this earth, clothed only in the garb of penitence and of prayer.

There are eight beatitudes. Hear them :

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

"Blessed are the peace makers, for they shall be called the Sons of God."

"Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

These sacred words fall into two groupings. The first four beatitudes announce the heavenly kingdom as the possession of certain souls, because they need it, and, as miserable, long for it.

The second four announce the heavenly kingdom as belonging to these same souls, because of what they *are* in themselves, because of their character.

Notice that the first and last beatitudes announce the blessing in the general words "kingdom of heaven"—the intervening beatitudes *particularize* this kingdom by naming the special blessings which it involves.

And what shall we say of the word "*blessed*," which begins each divine announcement? What is the reality in your experience and mine stated by the word

blessedness? Blessedness I define as the feeling of joy which accompanies the knowledge that our best self is being realized. Such blessedness will consecrate suffering. The realization of our best self involves very often a painful suppression of individual, momentary desires; yet we have a calm, immovable joy, amid the pain of suppression, from the certainty that our best self is being realized. In this wise do I distinguish blessedness from happiness and from pleasure? The joy of blessedness is the joy of progress, cost what it will. Such is the blessedness of the kingdom of heaven; our best selves are, in that kingdom, continually realized. Return we to the beatitudes.

There are notable omissions about them, especially if the kingdom of heaven be as I have presented it — an extension and enlargement of the kingdom of earth.

In the first place, there is no blessedness for knowledge.

In the second place, there is no blessedness for reputation.

In the third place, there is no blessedness for power.

In the fourth place, there is no blessedness for money. Knowledge, reputation, power, money; not a blessing for those things after which men and women and children strive day and night. There must be something the matter with the beatitudes, or something the matter with men and women and children. Blessed are the poor in spirit; blessed are they that mourn; blessed are the persecuted. What statements to make to men! The first omission I have named seems the

most serious — that is to say, we are willing — in a purely theoretical way, be it observed — to admit that the kingdom of heaven may possibly not mean money or reputation or power. It is quite fashionable at times to admit this, as you slip from your costly carriage to your costly pew in your costly church before your costly minister, but to admit that the kingdom of heaven is not knowledge, really that seems too bad. Is it right — is it true that knowledge should be omitted from the blessings of heaven? To this question I have no doubt that we should answer yes. Knowledge as knowledge could get on as comfortably in the center of hell as on the throne of God. God is not God because He is omniscient, but because He is all holy.

“In vain have I amassed
Within me all the treasures of man's mind,
And when I pause and set me down at last
No new power welling inwardly I find.
A hair-breadth is not added to my height,
I am no nearer to the infinite.”

Those words have laid the secret bare. Knowledge accumulated day and night causes no new powers to well inwardly, adds no hair-breadth to one's height. Consider the nature of knowledge and you will justify the poet's utterance. To be aware that there are two stoves in this room is knowledge; to be aware of Guizot's account of the Feudal system is knowledge; to be aware of the latest pronunciation is knowledge. I might illustrate indefinitely, but I have named enough instances to show that the only thing

you can possibly get out of knowledge *as knowledge* is conceit. And thus it comes that persons of a false, a sham culture are conceited—nothing else. It is in this fact that we find justification for the growing complaint against modern education—naming it Godless and non-moral. For this reason Felix Adler has written his very suggestive book on the moral education of children, devising a scheme of moral teaching which should be introduced into our public schools, and so meet the lack we are all beginning to feel.

If a new beatitude were to be written by some of our friends in the Bay State, it would, perhaps, read as follows:

“Blessed are they that are cultured, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Now, true culture is far and away more than knowledge. Matthew Arnold has well defined it when he said, “Culture is an acquaintance with the *best* that has been thought and written.” Such acquaintance is wholly impossible, except for those who are pure in heart, poor in spirit, and who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Consider the Psalms and the Book of Job as among the best things in Old Testament Literature. How are you to become acquainted with them? By committing them to memory? By learning all that modern biblical criticism has to say about them? Not so. A poor humble woman has begun the culture of her soul by the 23d Psalm. She has learned it? Oh, yes. She has not committed it to memory, she has learned it by *heart*. “The Lord is her Shepherd, she shall not want.”

If Matthew Arnold were to have gathered within the covers of one book the best things that had been thought and written, could he have made the world acquainted with these things by sending a copy of the book to each inhabitant of earth? If there is one truth more than another which should at the present time be taught in all our higher institutions of learning, it is that the kingdom of heaven does not belong to those whose sham culture is a conceit of knowledge. I do not know a more pitiable sight than a college graduate ascending the so-called high places of earth without one qualification of the citizens of heaven. I am asking myself whether any one concludes from what I have said that I desire to announce a new beatitude as follows :

“Blessed are the ignorant, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

For me to do this, or for any one to do this, would be to turn my original sentence about in an altogether unjustifiable manner.

All knowledge *as such* is non-religious, therefore all religion is without knowledge. It is incredible that rational creatures would criss-cross their reason after such fashion, but, alas, they do. Those who are pure in heart, who are poor in spirit, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, may safely acquire knowledge for ever and ever. The more *they* learn, the more their poverty of spirit, their purity of heart and their hunger and thirst after righteousness will be realized as their own best selves, as the basis of their character, the more they will be blessed. Let the rich man illustrate

my meaning. We never think of saying: "Blessed are the millionaires, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," and this because we know, or hear of so many millionaires who are not poor in spirit, who do not hunger and thirst after righteousness, and who are not overmuch persecuted for righteousness sake. Suppose, from such observation, we were to conclude in this wise: "Cursed are the rich, for theirs is the kingdom of death." Certainly our conclusion would be wholly unwarranted. A heavenly citizen, though rich—that is possible — and consider his blessedness as with his money he does, day by day, the work of a heavenly citizen on this earth. Money is indeed a power, but its greatest power is not displayed on the stock exchange, or in the purchase of European titles. Its true power appears when by it a heavenly citizen saves his fellow man, drives away his despair, clothes and feeds his perishing children, and opens a broad, sure way for their self-realization. I sometimes let my imagination wander, picturing what a multi-millionaire might do if only he were a heavenly citizen.

I have called your attention to the notable omissions from the beatitudes. No blessedness for knowledge, none for reputation, none for power, none for wealth.

Accepting the conception of blessedness as the feeling of joy which accompanies the knowledge that our best self is being realized, I think we are prepared to admit that these omissions are altogether justifiable. Certainly if this be true with regard to knowledge, it is true with regard to reputation, power and wealth. There is no need of ringing the changes on these

words, and it would be absurd to assert that reputation, power and wealth do not give their possessors a keen and genuine happiness. Men are not fools; they are not chasing phantoms when they pursue power, distinction and wealth. In nine cases out of ten it *is* a case of sour grapes when the trudger on the roadside affects to despise his fellow man in the carriage. If, however, the Sermon on the Mount teach truth, and there are many rich, powerful and distinguished men who believe it does, then power, reputation and wealth are not the marks of heavenly citizenship.

In approaching a separate study of the beatitudes, it will be of service to gather together certain leading truths which have thus far been presented and emphasized. Religion is primarily a matter of feeling, the supreme religious command being always this (Mark xii : 30, 31): "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength;" and the second is like, viz., this: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thy self." Love to God and to our neighbor compass the religious character. Love is our strongest and holiest feeling. Therefore, is religion primarily — chiefly — a matter of feeling. I have taken occasion to say that feeling is the deepest, the best, the most personal thing about any human being. There is no more monstrous thing about modern education than its maltreatment of feeling. Instead of suppressing feeling and the expression of feeling, education should use its utmost endeavor to develop and direct feeling. The only men and women in the world who have done anything worth the doing

have been men and women of feeling. The Bible professes to be the source of *religious* truth. If we allow the claim, two consequences of great moment are inevitable. First, any use of the Bible which does not result in a strengthening and deepening of religious feeling is a misuse; second, the Bible teachings must be a transcript of our own experience. In order to move a man you must touch him; this is as true of his feelings as it is of his intellect and his body. The Bible can not move you unless it touch you, it can not touch you unless between you and the Bible there is a community of nature, you must find yourself and your daily life in the statements of the Bible.

It is this end alone that I am seeking in these approaches to the Bible. My constant inquiry is this, does that portion of the Bible, which is called the Sermon on the Mount, touch us; does it enter into our experiences, and so offer material for the strengthening and deepening of our religious *feeling*?

Yet a further consideration: The ideal is the real only because the real is the ideal. There is a heaven beyond only because there is a heaven here. Time is an organic part of eternity. It is because we are that we shall be. No resurrection miracle is greater than the miracle of present daily life. That man, however humble his attainments or obscure his station, who possesses the characteristics named in this Sermon on the Mount, is here and now in the heavenly kingdom, and that man who lacks such characteristics is not in the kingdom of heaven, and all the might of God can not put him in that kingdom. It used to be supposed

that the way to gain heaven was to despise earth; it used to be supposed that the natural man was the opposite of the heavenly man, whereas, there is nothing unheavenly about the natural man except sin, sin is as *contra natural* as it is *contra heavenly*. Sin is *contra everything* that ought to be, and that which ought to be knows no distinction between time and eternity, no difference between earth and heaven. The truest way to enter heaven is to enter it on earth.

Blessedness I defined as the joy which accompanies the conviction that our own *best* self is being realized, and thus I distinguished blessedness from happiness and pleasure. Blessedness admits of joy in tribulation, of joy in discipline, of joy in sorrow. The kingdom of heaven is a condition in which our own best self is being realized through love to God and love to our neighbor. We now approach the beatitudes as so many statements which do or do not touch us, as statements which do or do not make known the true modes of our blessedness, of the realization of own best selves, of the kingdom of heaven.

*"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs
is the kingdom of heaven."*

I have said that it was not a part of my endeavor to declare the exact consciousness of Christ as He uttered this beatitude.

It is commonly said that, contrasting His disciples with the proud religious leaders of the people, He sought to console the weak followers by assuring them of the future possession of a heavenly kingdom. It is interesting to know that this beatitude appears abundantly and almost exactly in the Old Testament.

Listen :

"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath annointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek. He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. To comfort all that mourn, to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Isaiah 61 : 1 and 3.

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy. I dwell in the high and holy place with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Isaiah 57 : 15.

Who are the poor in spirit—who are the poor in spirit, whose spirit poverty constitutes them heavenly citizens? Why am I not in the heavenly kingdom

unless I am poor in spirit? Why is my own best self not being realized unless I am poor in spirit?

I name two commentator interpretations of these words, "poor in spirit," simply to show that we must be our own commentators. Two authorities (Achelis and Keil) add a word, and read "poor in the holy spirit." Others read "poor-spirited" (Grau). Let us rather say that the two words, "in spirit," show the place or sphere wherein the poverty appears—that, therefore, this poverty is not of body or of mind, but of spirit. Now, poverty of spirit is emptiness of spirit, dissatisfaction of spirit; it is the not finding—not having what spirit demands. The poor in spirit are those who recognize a lack, here and now, which neither wealth nor reputation nor learning can supply, a lack which calls aloud for heaven on this earth. I do not hesitate to say that a consciousness of such lack is a vital, fundamental state of all heavenly citizens. Without the consciousness of such lack your own best self can no more be realized than a filled vessel can be supplied with water. If you find all you need in money, in reputation, in learning, what use have you for anything else? It will at once be seen that this poverty of spirit can not coexist with conceit—with a sense of self-importance. Imagine a conceited man experiencing poverty of spirit; imagine a conceited man realizing his own best self; imagine him in the kingdom of heaven. Now, this is not because God is almighty and will not tolerate the conceited man—it is because the conceited man is almighty and will not tolerate God. For the conceited man there is

no God—absolutely none—no matter how many churches he joins, how many creeds he signs, how many prayers he orates, he is utterly without God in the world. For God, fortunately or unfortunately, is of such kind that He can not be had if He is not wanted, — can not even give Himself where He is not desired. I am calling attention to a fact, as genuine and as ultimate a fact as that you see with your eye or hear with your ear. For the conceited man, the man who is not poor in spirit, there is and can be no God—no kingdom of heaven, no realization of the best self. God is the best being; now, if you are the best being, you are God and you can not grow. Let us subject the matter to this reasoning. The best in man is represented by his affections, and this is because these affections carry him beyond and above himself. Is not our finite body dependent on the infinite universe, the boundless air, the measureless light, the exhaustless warmth? Is not our finite mind in like manner dependent on an infinite reality outside itself? What would become of that mind as mind, for which there was no more knowing. And does this law stop at that which is best, highest within us—our affections? Does not our heart demand for its growth an infinitely good being whom it may love? Now, the man who is not poor in spirit, aware of his poverty of soul, has no need of God, *i. e.*, can not realize his own best self, can not be blessed. The poor in spirit have the very first requisite for the kingdom of heaven—they want it—they want a God to love—a perfect one to whom their hearts may draw near. Every sincere atheist admits the truth of what

I am now saying. I shall quote to you, as I always do to my students in the department of ethics, a sentence from one of the most recent and able English atheists. He says: "I am not ashamed to confess that with this denial of God the universe to me has lost its soul of loveliness. When, at times, I think, as think at times I must, of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine, and the lonely mystery of existence as I now find it, at such times, I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible." That man knows the meaning of God for the soul of man. He knows that with God there is a kingdom of heaven on this very earth, and that without God there is nothing save the lonely mystery of existence. When I hear such an utterance coming from the very depths of a strong-natured man, and then hear following it the pitiable drivel of young Mr. Conceit and young Miss Conceit, for conceit is not a matter of sex, I feel as though the whip and dunce block were needed. Tell me how it is possible, except by the most terrible miseducation, for a young man or young woman to make the discovery that the Bible is a superstition, the church a farce, prayer bad form. Here is an atheist, as strong mentally as any student in an American university, and he is not ashamed to confess that with his denial of God the universe to him has lost its soul of loveliness. He thinks at times of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed, which once was his, and the lonely mystery of existence as he now finds it. Mr. Conceit and Miss

Conceit, who have closed their Bibles, taken their names from the church register, and locked, with the key of their sublime culture, the chamber of prayer, will see this unwilling atheist in the kingdom of heaven and themselves thrust out.

There is no place in the kingdom of heaven for any but those who are poor in spirit. Consider what I have called the *sphere*, the *place*, of this poverty—the spirit. This word as here used refers to the seat of the affection's emotions—the passions of various kinds. We find the same word used in the same sense in the eighteenth verse of the Thirty-fourth Psalm, viz: "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." That for which I am contending is that the Lord, even if he sought to do so, could not save any who were not of a contrite spirit. I can not save a student who *is* more than I am. Notice the word I use, who *is* more than I am. Suppose I have to deal with a student whose only measure of the teacher is the number of things he knows. This student sets himself zealously to work to discover my ignorance—my ignorance not of the subject I am teaching, but of some book on that subject, of some special fact connected with the subject. He satisfies himself of my ignorance, and to this extent and in this manner, I can never do that student one particle of service; I can not communicate myself to him by any possibility. He is, in his own estimation, more than I am. Do you not see the law in this matter. If there be no poverty in your spirit there will be no riches there. If there be no humility in

your affections, your emotions, God can not touch you even though He long to do so with an infinite longing. If the truths of body and the truths of mind can not be communicated to young Mr. Conceit and young Miss Conceit, how shall the very highest truths of all, those that concern our *affections*, be given to one who wants them not? feels no need for them.

“Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit, there is more hope of a fool than of him.”

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Blessed are those for whom bread and meat and raiment and equipages and houses and lands are not enough, their spirit is still poor. Blessed are those for whom scholarship and learning are not enough, their spirit is still poor. Blessed are those for whose spirit nothing is enough save God—the Holy One—theirs is the kingdom of heaven now and evermore.

*"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall
be comforted."*

"I had been ruined—if I had not been ruined," these are words attributed to Themistocles, and may well refer to that desperate period in his own and his country's history, when the great King (Xerxes) was laying waste Attica, whose inhabitants had fled to the adjacent island of Salamis. Here the Greek fleet had taken its station, while the Persian ships, to the number of twelve hundred, were in the harbor at Phalerum. From their ships the Athenians saw Athens with its acropolis and temples perish in the flames. Dissension arose among the Greeks as to what should be done—bitter dissension, Themistocles desiring to decide the issue at Salamis, and the Spartan generals determined to move the fleet to the isthmus and so protect what remained of Greece. Three counsels were called and Themistocles saw that the decision was going against him. He was ruined. Then he saved himself and his country. He sent word to the Persian fleet of the dissension among the Greeks, and that this was the very time when, by moving their ships to Salamis, the Greeks could be utterly destroyed. While the Greeks were still wrangling in bitter dispute the Persian fleet

appeared before Salamis and the question of a battle ground was settled, Greece was saved and Themistocles was its savior. I have sought by this illustration to show that there is a vital connection between stress, trial, disaster and victory. It is ruin, and nothing else that prevents ruin. "Hat nicht mich zum Manne geschmiedet die almächtige Zeit und das ewige Schicksal." "Was it not almighty time and eternal destiny that hammered me into a man?"

Now, if this be the fact of the matter in the so-called secular kingdom, is it likely to be any the less a matter of fact in the heavenly kingdom?

"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

Blessedness is the joy we feel at the realization of our own best selves, and sorrow, all such sorrow, as comes to a man in the spiritual life, is one of the chiefest means for self-realization. To reach the core of this matter we need to consider that there is a sham mourning, as there is a sham for every excellency. You have no sorrow — mourning, that does not penetrate to the center of your being, and so become a part of your life. We have many transient mourners whose mourning will not work much blessedness — this is, either because they are shallow-natured, and therefore *can not* sorrow, or because their afflictions have not reached the spirit.

It is continually said that sorrow and suffering are fearful mysteries under the government of a good God. Now, would it not be a desirable thing to try to figure out how much sorrow would be left in the

world if men behaved themselves—behaved themselves, I mean, for a generation or two? We ought to be a little more manly with God than we are.

Does sorrow, does mourning, always bring the blessedness of self-realization? This is the same thing as asking, does sunlight always bring health to the eyes? That depends upon the eyes. A diseased, inflamed eye will be ruined by a ray of sunlight. Does food, wholesome food, bring abounding health? That depends upon him who takes the food. There are many persons for whom food, the least food, is death; and because food is a necessity they die. Does sleep, an absolute necessity for rational life, always bring such life? Sleep is death for the man filled with opium.

Genuine sorrow always realizes our "best selves, for we can not feel genuine sorrow unless we ourselves are genuine. The sorrow, the mourning, which an ungentle man feels, works death, and only death. Consider the following picture: Here is a young man, inheritor of a sound body and a consequently joyous spirit. He is also the inheritor of large wealth; from his childhood, all that modern knowledge could offer for his education has been offered and accepted. A refined taste has been cultivated, and religion has been experienced. His religion is the same as the singing of a bird in the joyous Springtime. Why, of course, God is good, let me praise him in my song. What self-realization is there here? Not even the young man himself has any idea as to what manner of being he is. The situation changes. Money takes to itself

wings and flies away, and with it fly troops of friends—those sunshine friends who disgrace the sunlight in which they bask. With poverty comes slander; for the slanderer—vilest of men—is careful to aim his arrows only at the man who is going down hill with his back turned. Now, it appears that the song of this youth had not a vestige of worth or of religion about it; his was a religion nursed in joy, and that is not the proper nurse for religion.

This youth makes the discovery that he has been very unfairly, outrageously treated. He did not deserve to be bereft of money and money-friends. While he is thus bemoaning his loss and cursing the slanderer, sickness lays hold of him. Pain, something that he had heard tell of in story-books and newspapers, now grips him all over, gathers him in, folds him up and settles down to stay. Then this young man's soul rises in rebellion. He shakes his puny fist at God and the universe, and dies with hell in his heart. If things had only been different he would have died a sweet song-bird. This young man did not mourn, church member though he was, therefore he experienced no blessedness. He raved and cursed, and his lamentation was unto death.

“Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.”

There is a mourning which is unto life. It is the mourning of a sincere soul; it is the mourning unto repentance—unto self-realization; a mourning, without which there is no blessedness, no unfolding of our highest selves. Let us look at the very unfashionable

matter of sin. I know it is almost unpardonable to talk of ourselves as sinners. We make mistakes, of course—the best of people make mistakes, *errare est humanum*. But sin—oh, no, we do not sin; we do not choose the wrong course when we are perfectly aware that we might choose the right course. This is so old-fashioned, this talk about sin. Grant all that you say, but kindly allow me to make an old, utterly out-of-style supposition. Permit me to suppose that men are sinners; permit me to suppose that sin means death, moral death, soul death, eternal death, just as arsenic means death, physical death, eternal physical death. What a supposition! The supposition that there is sin in the human heart. Did you never meet my acquaintance, the hypocrite? He is the bottom man in hell. He uses smiles, and psalms, and prayers for the purpose of lying and stabbing. He is a professor of religion for the opportunity it gives him to serve the devil. The only time he feels sad is when he is cornered and forced to tell the truth. You may always know when he has told the truth by the gloomy cast of his countenance. I am afraid this supposition, that there is sin in the human heart, will turn out to be more than a supposition. However, if there *be* sin in the human heart, its inevitable effect is, to prevent the realization of our own best selves, *i. e.*, to keep us out of the heavenly kingdom.

Now, what is the first requisite to deliverance from sin? *Sorrow for sin*. Without sorrow for sin, mourning for sin, there can be absolutely no deliverance from sin. Here again a sham sorrow works its work

of death. The sorrow which the sinner feels is not because he is a sinner, but because he has been found out. He would have gone on with a smiling countenance and a song in his mouth, but, alas! he has been found out. His sin was discovered; then he did, indeed, feel bad—oh, very bad; he even committed suicide, his distress was so great. Such sort of mourning will not be comforted; no joy at self-realization will ever spring from such bitter waters.

There *is* a mourning for sin which simply illustrates the law of cause and effect, by producing a repentance not to be repented of, and this mourning was put into words long years ago by the Publican who said, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

I do not see how any human being can begin his self-realization without such an experience. He needs to know, I leave it entirely to you, does he not need to know, that sin must be mourned for simply as sin, regardless of all consequences? How is he to turn about in any other way, or from any other motive? Can God turn him about if he have not mourned the true mourning? We see at once that there is no power in heaven or on earth that can turn the sinner from sin if he do not mourn his sinfulness.

I pass now to another characteristic of all true mourning—all genuine sorrow, which shows again the causal connection between grief and self-realization. Without mourning there can be no sympathy, and what would life be, what would our natures be, without sympathy? Let us look at this closely, for I think we shall discern here one of the brightest rays of light on

a very dark subject. I am sometimes inclined to believe that sympathy is worth its cost. We could have a very delightful world if there were no sin and no suffering. There might be, if death did not end all, an uninterrupted intellectual progress; there might be an equally uninterrupted esthetic progress. With no pain and no sorrow, how sweet would be the freshness of the morning—the glorious sweep of the sun, the deep night, with its moon and stars. Without pain, without sorrow, how beautiful the flushing green of Spring, the rich Summer and the tinted Autumn; but the touching of soul upon soul would be lacking. We could not know the meaning of comfort, for no one would need to be comforted. Our world would be one in which no sorrow had developed sympathy. Yet there is no depth in the human heart like the depth of sorrow, and there is no comfort for the human heart like the comfort of one who has sorrowed with us, and *so* lays heart upon heart. Is it not true that the soul that has not sorrowed is an imperfect soul and must remain an imperfect soul? Suppose you were to meet a company of angels—bright, glorious, but without sin, without sorrow. Would you not say here are those for whom heights and depths of being are entirely impossible? They have never known the blessedness of being comforted—their love is necessarily dwarfed in its growth. Not for one of them has a mother ever laid down life, or a father sympathized in his distresses. More than this—far more than this—not one of them has done such divine work for another—not one of them, from the depths

of his own sorrow, has said I love you, and will abide with you forever.

“Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” They shall have the joy of self-realization—they shall know that they are being perfected through suffering—they shall find stirring within them a divine compassion, a heavenly sympathy—they shall know that of which their nature is capable, viz., a Godly sorrow. Thus have I sought to establish our beatitude as a simple, beautiful statement of fact; I have sought to have the beatitude touch you—to establish its truth by a direct appeal to your own experiences. It is worthy of reflection that He who uttered these words was pre-eminently known as the Man of Sorrows, the one acquainted with grief, and this it is that has brought Him so close to the heart of humanity. He has been called and accepted as our elder brother, touched with the feeling of our infirmities. I can not close my presentation without asking you to look at our beatitude as a picture of the future. In doing this I depart from the fundamental plan of these lectures.

You will remember that I asked for the practice of a double charity—that those of you who accept the Bible as the inspired word of God, and those who consider it a purely human book, should lay aside these beliefs for the time being and join me in a distinct inquiry. This inquiry was, first, what facts in our daily lives point strongly to the existence of God and a kingdom of heaven; second, what facts in our lives confirm the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount.

I have not asked you to accept these teachings because Christ uttered them, but I *have* asked you to determine with me what facts in life teach the same truths.

You will, I think, bear me witness that, thus far, I have kept rigidly to my plan. You have received nothing from me *ex cathedra*, but every teaching has been based upon what you knew to be true.

Give me, then, the pleasure of trying to outline a picture, a picture of the future, and be not disturbed if this picture be realistic; perhaps its realism will be its idealism.

Have you ever reflected that, whatever may change in human history, there is one thing that changeth not, and that is, sorrow. Kings and princes pass away, nations are absorbed and disappear—sorrow abides. It is said of the Man of Sorrows that, in the time of his trial, they all forsook him and fled. Has that awful desertion never been repeated? Now, what does this omnipresence of sorrow prove, this consanguinity of sorrow? It proves that, beyond all question, the best things still remain. There could be no sorrow at falsified friendship to-day unless friendship were precious to-day. There could be no sorrow at the death of the beloved to-day unless the beloved were beloved to-day. Our sorrows reveal our hearts, and they do this as nothing else can. Who comforts us in our sorrows? The true and sympathetic friend. He takes our hand, and we are comforted. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

The picture which Christianity has drawn athwart our heavenly sky is this: "A God of love and sympathy shall gather the true mourners unto himself and shall comfort them. He shall touch them with His pervading presence and they shall be comforted." Does that belittle God? Then, all hail the belittlement of God! Let us belittle Him until we touch Him. But this is no belittlement of God; it is the divinest, sweetest conception of God that man can entertain. Are not love and sympathy our choicest selves? If God have these very same affections in perfection, is He not our dearest friend, touched with the feelings of our infirmities?

We should not refine our God and the kingdom of heaven until they vanish from our sight. There is so much pain, distress, short-coming in this finite life that we contrapose heaven to earth, and call heaven everything that earth is not. Pitiably and radically mistaken. If we do not learn to love here and now, how shall we learn to love in heaven? If we do not draw near to God here and now, how shall we ever draw near to Him? Let us see our heavenly kingdom here and now—let us see the King in His beauty.

Test this matter from the point of view of earthly friendship. Let us refine upon friendship. We do not, can not mean as friend, this *particular person*, because he, after all, is a very imperfect affair; he eats and he drinks and he sleeps, and then he has his limitations from the inner side also; he is sometimes jealous and demands over much.

We do not propose to degrade the noble idea of friendship by surrounding it with a body—basing it on a stomach. What we mean by friendship is pure friendship—it is the lofty *idea*—the glorious *conception*. By and by, as we grow old and poor, every one forsakes us and flees. We now draw near to abstract friendship. “Oh, thou abstract friendship in thy magnificent nothingness, draw near and comfort us.” And nothing draws near—nothing comforts.

The religious soul hears the words of our beatitude, “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted,” and looks confidently forward to the time when God—the Supreme consciousness—the perfect Father—shall comfort him—in no abstract way, but as friend comforteth friend.

“ *Blessed are the meek, for they shall
inherit the earth.*”

In the thirty-seventh Psalm we read as follows: “For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be—yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace,” (v. 10 and 11). “Evil doers shall be cut off, but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth.”

We see that the beatitude, which is the subject of our present meditation, is in part a literal quotation from the thirty-seventh Psalm. The meek, who in the Psalm, are said to inherit the earth, are pronounced blessed by Christ.

Our fundamental inquiry is, I doubt, not clearly understood by you all. We ask who are these meek ones whose inheritance is the earth, and what *necessary* relation obtains between such meekness and such inheritance? In other words, is there anything in our *daily experience* which reveals a necessary, causal relation between meekness and inheritance? We carry with us always in these studies that conception of blessedness which presents it as the joy attendant upon the consciousness of our self-realization. How come

the meek to be blessed by the knowledge of such self-realization in their necessary inheritance of the earth? It is plain that before we can enter into this deeper meaning of the beatitude we must determine who are the "meek," and what is the "earth inheritance." I have already called your attention to the movement of the Greek language through its three periods of youth, where speak Homer, Hesiod and Herodotus, of full vigor in strength and elegance, where speak the great tragedians—and Plato and Xenophon—its decline after the Macedonian conquest, and further still after the Roman dominion; where speak Aristotle, Polybius and Plutarch.

The New Testament Greek is of this third kind, and represents for the most part such knowledge of the language as Hebrews would be apt to gather in the relations of business and commerce. This imperfect knowledge of an imperfect language was set to the task of expressing the Old Hebrew Testament; Greek was not meeting Greek, but Hebrew, and foreign conceptions were somehow to be clothed by a language that knew them not.

In the New Testament there was no Hebrew original to guide the writers, and we find evidences of this lack continually. The English equivalents for the Hebrew-Greek word "meek" in our beatitude are "mild," "gentle," and the same term appears repeatedly in the New Testament in the very same meaning. There is not time here to quote these numerous passages, yet I will read the last verse of the fourth chapter of Paul's first Corinthian letter, because it makes

the matter very plain; "What will ye?" asks Paul. "Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love and in the spirit of meekness?" *i. e.*, in the spirit of mildness and gentleness. Our beatitude then reads:

"Blessed are the mild, the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth."

We have seen that these words are taken from the Thirty-seventh Psalm, and it is well known that the phrase "inherit the earth," was but a way of saying possess the promised land, the land of Canaan, the end of a long journey and many trials. Christ's use of the words, "inherit the earth," the land of promise, could have reference only to the newer land, the spiritual land, the heavenly kingdom which he sought to establish. Our beatitude, therefore, reads and means, "Blessed are the mild, the gentle, for they shall possess the kingdom of heaven."*

Is there any organic, necessary connection between the realization of our best selves and mildness and gentleness? Why have we to be mild, gentle, if we would be blessed as heavenly citizens—happy in the joy of self-realization, whithersoever and wheresoever we live? It is, I confess, a delight to me to know that our beatitude pronounces no blessing upon Uriah Heep, or upon any of his numerous connections. What a pity that so sweet and true a word as meek should have come to stand for so despicable reality as Uriah Heep!

We have a sweet, a beautiful, a great thought to deal with this morning. Meekness, mildness, gentleness,

*Read the sixtieth chapter of Isaiah, in special, the last verses, for the spiritual significance of this teaching.

essential to heavenly citizenship, to that kingdom of heaven which we may enter here and now; essential to that self-realization, the consciousness of which is, indeed, blessedness. How the truth of this sometimes pours over us like golden sunlight. I have walked often among the Swiss Alps, and it is their gentleness that makes them great. No fuming, no raging—immense, silent—they hold up some of the tenderest, sweetest spots on this earth, as Pilatus and Rigi hold up the Lucerne Lake.

When power is gentle, how great that power. And here we are at the parting of the ways in character, and here there be those who will turn aside and never enter the kingdom of heaven. How many men are gentle? How many women are gentle? How many children are gentle? But you ask, what is this gentleness, what is this mildness upon which such stress is laid? Here again I must brush away the obscuring cobwebs of sham. I know people who speak with the softest of voices—a turtle-dove voice—yet are they not gentle. They are hyenas; their pleasantest sounds are the crunching of your bones between their jaws, in the privacy of their den. It has become fashionable to be soft-voiced, to tread lightly, and to look like a dish of milk. How the devil must amuse himself as he watches his servants aping the virtues.

There is another sham gentleness which I call the esthetic sham. There are some persons born to a sense of physical cleanliness, personal neatness and order—they are immaculate in their clothing; if they possess wealth all their appointments are of the most

refined kind, but like Grandcourt they do not care "a languid curse" for any thing or any one but themselves, and like Grandcourt they are capable of the most extreme brutality. In their natures there is no gentleness, no meekness whatsoever. What a kingdom of heaven *they* would make! There is yet a higher and more refined sham gentleness, and some who exhibit it are not themselves aware of their own deficiency. These are delightful people to meet—they really love the beautiful—they have an all-pervading sense for it; nothing so much disturbs them as the unbeautiful, and here we reach the root of their character—it is beauty they love, and beauty long ago secured a permanent divorce from goodness. Put goodness in a smock frock, give his eyes a cross squint, deform his back, singe his hair and palsy his arms, and you could not draw these sweet people to him if he were the divinest soul among men. *Moral* beauty they have not yet learned to discern. To worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness—for this they are not adequate—therefore is their gentleness not such as admits to the kingdom of heaven, *i. e.*, is it not such as will realize their own best selves. Do you not agree with me? Is there not something in our common nature higher than love of the beautiful and its attendant, gentleness, mildness, meekness? Rob these people of their beauty and you have put out the light of all their seeing.

We return to our question for which we now seek an *affirmative* answer. What is the meekness, mildness, gentleness essential to citizenship in the heavenly

kingdom? The best reply that can be given is the presentation of such gentleness in a concrete character. Gentleness is an abstract term, and all my students know what to do with an abstract term; they must find the person or the thing that stands for it. Where shall we go for that perfect embodiment of gentleness which, as a living picture, will show the quality we seek. We go to a galley slave, an escaped convict, brutalized by mistreatment, hungry as the dog is hungry, he stands before the priest whose silver candlesticks are in his hands; "he tells us," says the gendarme, "that you gave him these." "'Tis so, my children, they are his." Jean Valjean stands alone in the night, the silver candlesticks still in his hands.

Follow him from that hour and you follow a gentle man—not into, but *in* the kingdom of heaven. Jean Valjean was a meek, a gentle, a mild man. Was he weak? His physical strength, which toyed with strong men as a child toys with thistle-down, was only an incomplete symbol of his character-strength. There is not in literature a sublimer portrait of moral conflict and moral victory than this galley slave exhibits, when, as mayor of the village, beloved by all, the source of good to all, he learns that another man is about to be returned, as Jean Valjean, to the convict's prison. The other man is, indeed, a base man and deserving imprisonment. But ah, what a difference—he is not Jean Valjean. An honorable life—the tenderest, truest, love of all who knew him, the bright and beautiful light of heaven, every thing that a strong man holds dear, to be given up forever—not only so,

but his place to be taken among the vile—ah, God be praised that such a triumph can even be conceived as was accomplished that night in the mayor's small, plain bed-room. Jean Valjean left all for duty, and so great, so transcendently great was the force of his gentle character, that Inspector Javert, the embodiment of law as mere legality, was lifted by it into an atmosphere of purity he had never conceived. The Inspector could not bear the shock of his own momentary greatness; he allowed the good convict to escape, and then destroyed himself. Jean Valjean throughout his majestic moral history was a gentle, a meek man. If you wish to know how gentleness, meekness, not only comport with resistless strength, but justify and adorn it, study the course of his life. We meet now our most serious question: Is this meekness, is this gentleness an essential requisite for the kingdom of heaven, *i. e.*, for the realization of our best selves, in the consciousness of which lies our blessedness? What is there in your experience and mine that confirms this teaching? In the first place there is the testimony of our inner feeling. We somehow feel that when we have been gentle we have been at our best. For, and mark well the reason, it is not possible for us to be gentle and false, gentle and hypocritical, gentle and unreliable, gentle and self-seeking. Here again we need to distinguish the sham from the real—true gentleness and the jovial temperament are not interchangeable terms. The jovial temperament is often but a matter of digestion and pocket-book, while gentleness goes to the root of character. The jovial man is capable of a

brutality that would disgrace a grizzly bear—the meek, the gentle man can not be brutal. What say you then to this thought—the realization of your best self demands that you shall be gentle, mild, meek? I do not hear much insistence upon this gentleness, this meekness, in our modern life. Our admiring gaze is lifted toward the hustler—now, there can be a gentle hustler—*him* we may admire, but the gentle hustler is almost as rare as a white crow. Vigor, enterprise, self-reliance, these are *all* praise-worthy, but they are not worthy of all praise, or the *chief* praise, yet this it is that they receive. Let me present you two fathers, do you decide which is the creation of imagination and which is the real every-day father.

“My son, be meek, be gentle, in all that you do. It is far more important that you should be gentle than that you should be rich; far more important you should be gentle than that you should attain reputation; look well after these inner excellencies, for without them you are nothing.” Here is the other parent: “My son, bestir yourself; show some push; don’t be so squeamish. You are too thin-skinned. Don’t you want to be anybody? Look at Tom; he is walking right along; that boy has got some sense; he knows on which side his bread is buttered. It is none of your business to look after your employer’s morals. You do what he tells you. Why, if everyone was like you, there would be no business done at all. You need not stand back, afraid to hurt somebody’s feelings—that’s his lookout. If he steps in your way, teach him a lesson. Why, my boy, if I had acted as you

do, and tried the gentle plan of doing business, I would have been in the poor-house years ago."

Can a man who is not meek, not gentle, inherit the spiritual Canaan, the promised land? Can he be blessed with a joy of self-realization? Ah, these are searching truths! They cut to the very quick of character, yet they are not among the required studies of our modern curriculum. Much Latin, less Greek, some Mathematics, considerable Science, History, English Literature, a snatch or two at Philosophy—the Beatitudes?

Yet, we have demonstrated that these beatitudes can be studied by a body of university students representing the most varied and contradictory opinions. More than that, far more than that, they can be studied exclusively from their *religious* side. Episcopalians, and Presbyterians, and Methodists, and Baptists, and Congregationalists, and Swedenborgians, and Unitarians, and Catholics, and Hebrews, can make, and have made, common cause in a *religious* study of the Beatitudes. Not only so, they have *agreed* in the general religious results of our study. I would far rather be engaged in such work than in the dissemination of Biblical criticism. Be it observed, I impugn no man's motives, neither do I prescribe his duty, I simply express a preference. I would rather, as meeting the imperative need of this time, and as meeting my own deepest want, consider religious truth in the light of daily experience.

"Blessed are the meek, the gentle, for they shall possess Canaan, the land of promise, the kingdom"—of heaven.

No man but the gentle man can possess the kingdom of heaven, because he only can realize his best self here and hereafter. I said that this was not only a sweet, a tender truth, but a great and a glorious reality. There is so much in it that I know not where to stop my presentation.

The only alternative to gentleness, to meekness, is *force*, SHEER FORCE. The alternative is not strength, for strength is made sweet and precious by gentleness. The alternative is sheer force. Many of our so-called great men are mere forces, like lightning, or gravitation, or steam. They bear down opposition like an avalanche, or cut through it with the damascene edge of their intellect. Do you not see that this is all sheer force? Weld your blade, till, like Saladin's, it parts a silken pillow, or, like Richard's battle ax, it cleaves a mace in twain; you have but a different adjustment of force—sheer force. Refine your intellect, till, like Talleyrand's, it cuts all difficulties with its lying edge; or make it massive, cold and hard, till, like Napoleon's, it crushes and sweeps away all resistance. It is a matter of directed force.

Picture a kingdom of heaven of such sheer forces; either there is no kingdom of heaven, or these people will be compelled to pass their time elsewhere.

"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

What is the truth in these words? What facts in our lives repeat this beatitude? Are hunger and thirst after righteousness necessary for the realization of our best selves?

Let us consider the two sides of the statement, "hunger and thirst," "after righteousness."

Hunger and thirst, physically speaking, are sensations, sensations with the least amount of *knowledge* in them. We share them with the animals and the imbeciles. It is by the finger tips, the ear, the eye that we know, by hunger and thirst we may be driven mad and turned to beasts. What a strange place for hunger and thirst—in a beatitude. But hunger and thirst are the words to use; no others can take their places. They stand for those resistless feelings in the soul, which will never leave that soul in peace, till they are satisfied. And here, at the center as it were of the beatitudes, is emphasized the magnificent truth which binds them together. They are *all* feeling. Blessed the poor in spirit—blessed they that mourn—blessed the meek—blessed the merciful—blessed the pure in heart—blessed the peace-makers—blessed the perse-

cuted. This seem wonderful. What is the meaning of it all? It means first and fundamentally that there is nothing so absolutely our own, our very selves, as our feelings. Test this; close your outer eyes, and with the inner eye behold your thoughts, your plans, your purposes, come and go across the theater of your mind. Open the eye of flesh and behold your decision as you bring it forth by act of will, see your resolute determination, as it grasps the pen and signs the paper, shaping, it may be, your destiny for life. These thoughts and this volition you can stand over against and contemplate. But what of the feelings that wrung your heart as you signed the paper; did you see *them*—did *they* come and ago across the stage? Alas, no. They were your very life—if ever you could put them into words, then were they thoughts *about* your feelings, *feelings* no longer. As a man feeleth, *so is he*.

This reveals the mission of feeling in human life. It stands midway between knowledge and action—knowledge—fact is, its source, and by it in turn you are moved to deed. This is the law of your life, and from it there is no escape. Let me illustrate my meaning by the most unusual and out of the way illustration imaginable. I will illustrate by what is called the logical feeling. That is a most unheard of feeling, is it not? As far as it seems real at all, it seems painful and dreary. But consider. Do you recognize such a feeling as the feeling of pleasure in clearness and order, and of pain at obscurity and confusion? This is the stirring of the logical feeling within you. Give heed to it for your own sake and for the sake of all

who may come within the sphere of your influence. As you are moved by this feeling in greater or less degree, will be your striving toward clear and well ordered forms of thought. But there is something deeper about this logical feeling—its center, its heart, is the pleasure we find in agreement and the pain we find at disagreement, among the contents of our minds. Let us suppose that we had no such feeling—that our mind's life was at the beginning a mere knowing—then the most incongruous knowledge would be the same as any other—not one of us would be led to make the slightest effort to think. Why should we take the trouble to change our mental status when all arrangements of them seemed alike. How feeling—yes, this poor, despised, *logical* feeling—changes all this. We are pained by disagreement and delighted by agreement, and under the stimulus of this feeling we move heaven and earth for truth, for agreement, for unity, in our minds. Disorder, disagreement, torment us because they threaten to destroy the intellect itself. In the same way operates the feeling of *conscience* of that awful *ought*—it would preserve us from the moral cleaving of ourselves in twain. It is then a fact that the logical feeling moves men to think, to search out agreement in the seemingly contradictory phenomena of the world and of human life.

In like manner feeling for righteousness moves men toward righteousness. You must want righteousness as in your bodies you hunger and thirst after food. As hunger and thirst may mount in their intensity until they drive men blind and mad in search for food, so a

hunger and thirst after righteousness may stir men with a holy zeal which shall blind them to all personal consequences, loss of property, of reputation, of friends, of life itself. Will anything do this work or give you this power but hunger and thirst. Behold the bearing of the truth on the realization of your own best selves. He who has never known hunger, who has never known thirst, has never known the meaning of *nourishment*. He has never felt the life-pulses quicken within him ; he has never known what a divine thing it is to live. This is as true for one part of our nature as another. We are to see that this is a law—a necessary and universal mode of our entire being.

Want, a feeling of want, is essential to our proper nourishment. Speaking now physically, that food only does a man the highest good which is eaten with a consciousness of want. Conscious hungering for food gives more than half its power to food. In like manner, if you do not hunger and thirst after righteousness, you will not be filled with righteousness. Righteousness is something you must want before you can have it, or before it can do you any good. What is this righteousness after which I must hunger if I would become a heavenly citizen ; would realize my own best self? And here there is need of that charity of which I have spoken at so much length. Let no believer in the doctrine of imputed righteousness be reluctant to say that righteousness is *rightness*. If Christ was righteous, He was right; a righteous being is a right being. The kingdom of heaven is made up of right beings, not of wrong beings. Now,

right, as a quality of the soul, is something born there of love and choice. No man can put it on from without, neither can God thrust it into the soul by His almighty power. Such is righteousness, or rightness, as a soul quality, as a fact outside the soul, righteousness is either the holy nature of God or the immutable law of matter. We do not like to speak of gravitation as righteous, or attraction or repulsion as righteous, or the straight line as righteous. Yet there are left us only the two alternatives. There is a Holy Being, whose nature is the supreme source of all right, or right is the immutable way in which this universe goes. Get into line with the universe, and you are in line with right. Such may be the righteousness of the atheist—obedience to law. See, now, the advantage of him who judges that he has reason to believe in God's righteousness or rightness. He is still obedient to law, but it is loving obedience to the law of a Loving Intelligence. To hunger and thirst after righteousness is to hunger and thirst after that which is right in all things. Now, observe, of such hunger and thirst is rightness born as a quality in the soul. The strong feeling of hunger moves the soul to will the right, as the soul, at the given time, *understands* the right. Nothing but hunger and thirst for the right will do this decisive work. "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled"—filled with what? With that for which they hunger and thirst. And here we reach the fundamental reality announced in this beatitude. You may hunger and thirst for other things and never

get them. You may hunger and thirst for wealth, yet remain poor; hunger and thirst for learning, yet remain ignorant; hunger and thirst for power, yet remain obscure. You may not hunger and thirst for righteousness—rightness—and not receive it, for hunger and thirst bring it, because it is the heart's adoption of the right way. In the moral world there need be no defeat.

*"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall
obtain mercy."*

One of the ablest, most authoritative students of the Sermon on the Mount remarks that, with this beatitude, the discourse addresses itself to those who *possess*, and not, as heretofore, to those who *desire*. The poor in spirit, the meek, those who mourn, those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, represent desires; the merciful, the pure in heart, the peace-makers, the persecuted, represent possession.

It does not seem to me that the real principle of division in these beatitudes has been thus rightly stated. Desires are no less possessions of the desiring soul than are what we call qualities, such as mercy and pure-heartedness. Meekness is as much a possession of the soul as mercy. If there be any distinction among the beatitudes at all akin to the one I have mentioned, it is that we now reach characteristics of heavenly citizenship, which are necessarily *active*. Mercy which is not actively merciful toward another is not mercy, and a peace-maker who makes no peace with any one is not a peace-maker. Still, I do not regard even this division as fundamental, for desires always prompt to action, and their realization is quite

certain to involve others in manifold ways. This much, however, of the present distinction is left us; if we can imagine ourselves as gentle, meek, without being actively so, in daily conduct and toward others, we can no wise imagine ourselves as merciful without actively displaying such mercy. Among the surprises I have met in the religious study of the Beatitudes and of the Sermon on the Mount, perhaps the chief surprise is due to the very little that has been said or written respecting so remarkable a portion of Scripture. This, I know, is, in part, occasioned by the belief early fostered in the Church, that Christ's sermon was a sort of spiritualized Judaism, or legalism, soon to be superseded by the fuller revelation in His own person, and by the Pauline doctrines. Nevertheless, it is strange that in these later days, these days of enlightenment, students and teachers have not approached the great discourse as a body of statements worthy to be tested by daily life. I find it almost equally remarkable that, of the little that has been said concerning the Beatitudes, the very least has fallen to the share of our present beatitude—"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." There is no more suggestive utterance among the Beatitudes than this, none more searching in its application to human character, none more abundantly confirmed by experience.

Whatever we come to accept as the proper conception of mercy and the merciful man (and I sincerely hope we shall agree here), one fact remains unquestioned, viz.: that the exercise of mercy obliges us to go out of and beyond ourselves. By mercy we are forced

away from self to another *self*, and the life lesson is learned that only by *such* active self-forgetfulness is self realized. Observe here where the emphasis falls, which is not a matter of *oratory* but of *truth*. I say by mercy we are forced away from self to another *self*, and only by *such* an active self-forgetfulness is self realized. You must forget yourself in another *self* to realize yourself. Why is this? The reason is two-fold—first, because it is only when you are out of and beyond yourself, that yourself is healthy. The *healthy* character is the *self-forgetful* character; second, because only another self can arouse yourself to action. You can not love a diamond, a rose, or a bird, a stone, a plant, or an animal, as you love a person. Let us look more closely at both sides of this searching doctrine—this strong meat. I say the healthy character is the self-forgetful character; self-consciousness is a sign of disease. As it is possible by mere concentration of attention upon a perfectly healthy arm or heart, or lung, to produce disorder there, so it is possible by narrowing attention to self to vitiate every faculty you possess. The selfish man is an unrealized man, he has defeated himself absolutely; memory, imagination, power of thought, will, are stunted, diseased, by self-seeking. This fatal issue shows itself most markedly where we should most expect it in man's highest self—his feelings. No man can love himself alone and grow on the food. It is as though the lungs should fall in love with themselves, with their marvelous structure, and refuse air, or the stomach with its wonderful character, and refuse food.

As the body must go out of itself to grow and live, so must the mind and soul go out of themselves to develop. It is a fact, no less sad than real, that the truth of which I speak is admitted with regard to man's body and his mind, but unheeded or denied with respect to his soul, *i. e.*, his highest self. Goethe led a healthy life physically and intellectually for many years. There was no morbid self-examination as to his body or his intellect, and we behold in him the expected, the inevitable results—physical and mental powers at their highest. He forgot his body and forgot his mind in life, abounding, outward life, and in intellection. He instinctively avoided all stress or strain—the fever of youth was not with him a disease, did not taint his early manhood or maturity. He was a magnificent physical and intellectual personality; he went out of himself to a certain extent, and to that extent only he realized himself. What he gave the world was as spontaneously, irresistibly given as what he received was spontaneously appropriated. It is not in evidence that he loved any one—loves—yes, *love*—*no*, his worshippers say that he was above passion, either for a person or a cause; *here* there was no self-forgetfulness or absorption. To be above passion for a person or a cause is to come short of the highest human self. Had there been added to Goethe's character an ardent affection for men, a love for humanity, the equipose might have been disturbed, but the man would have been greater. I have purposely selected this example, and my reasons are two: I have been and shall never cease to be an admirer of

Goethe's sympathetic intellect and his perfection of interpretation. The greatest of what he did will never again be as well done. The Faust story has had its complete artistic embodiment. Goethe was able to project his work and to look at it over against himself as a true artist must always do; but the true artist is not the highest type of man, he does not realize our nature as only the heavenly citizen can realize it, and here appears my second reason for this illustration. Goethe has been the ideal of the literary student ever since Carlyle presented him to the English mind. The English student has pilgrimaged to Weimar, and removed his shoes as he entered the holy place. Therefore do I say there is a better than Goethe—a higher reach of our nature—a diviner outcome possible for us all. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." There was no mourning with Goethe. I say *with* him, *in* him, *of* him. He looked at the shadow of life, but it never darkened the inner heart of him. *Therefore* he could describe it. "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth." No one ever spoke or thought of a gentle Goethe, and thereby is the gentle Christ diviner. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." No one ever spoke or thought of a pure-hearted Goethe, and thereby is Jesus of Nazareth, spiked between two thieves, nearer to God.

What was the characteristic of the sad Jesus—not His health of body or His strength of mind—it was His love for man. "I lay down my life," He said. Goethe laid down no life; we are not assured that he

even made a sacrifice. Well, friends, these teachings are not in the university curriculum, and modern education makes for them almost no provision. You can rise to professorship and authorship without them, but you know, as I know, that the young man, the woman in this room who shall most realize these truths will most realize their natures.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." What is mercy and what is it to be merciful? Here is the conception of mercy, which I earnestly commend to your thoughtful acceptance. Mercy, as a quality in character, is the product of that personal attitude of sympathy which is the result of individual temptation and suffering. No man, as I think, can be merciful who is lacking in this, and no man can possess such sympathy without being merciful. Men are not born merciful; children are brutally cruel, without being so, *i. e.*, they are savages without knowing it. How they torture animals without a sense of torturing. And some of these children grow up on the food of wealth, with no pain, and are unconscious barbarians to the day of their death. They really do not know, can not imagine, that their luxury and their sweet-scented indifference are drawing the life-blood of hundreds.

The dictionary definitions of mercy are far from satisfactory. They present mercy, either by direct statement or implication, as a quality that runs athwart justice. "Mercy," says a standard dictionary, "is a disposition to overlook injuries, or to treat an offender better than he deserves, an inclination to forego jus-

tice, to remit penalty," to forgive obligation. The English for the Greek word in our beatitude is less objectionable, not from what it contains, but from what it does not contain. Pitiful, compassionate, actively so, are the English renderings for our Greek word. Active pity, active compassion, might, however, be taken in the dictionary sense as exhibiting an inclination to forego justice, to remit penalty, to treat an offender better than he deserves.

Now, two things seem to me clear in this matter—first, there is a settled conviction in the general mind that mercy and justice are at variance with one another; second, if this be so, there is a moral split in man's nature which makes right living impossible. There is nothing more human—more divinely human, about the best man, than a demand for justice. There is nothing deeper, more radical in his nature, than this same demand for justice. Now, if at the call of mercy, he be required to forego justice, he is at war with himself. This lies in the very nature of morality—that which is moral ought always to be done; if mercy be moral it ought always to be practiced; if justice be moral it ought always to be exercised. How then can a man, morally speaking, be mercifully unjust? Is it not a fair assumption that no such inner division of man against himself exists? Is it not fair to suppose that we may have been creating a schism, by misreading facts, as we turn the wind into a sigh or groan, and a tree-trunk into a pursuing enemy.

To know whether mercy crosses justice, we should know the meaning of justice. Are you prepared with

a definition of justice? To speak less formally, what say you of justice? What is the fact covered by this constantly used and abused word? No less a man and thinker than Mr. Mill has said that justice is what is commanded, ordered. Mr. Mill, I regret to say, presents this as the root idea of justice. He betakes himself to the Latin language and finds that *jubeo* means to order, command—*justum*, something ordered or commanded; therefore, justice is, at bottom, the expression of a command. If this were a matter to be settled by etymology, I might insist that Mr. Mill should go to the German and English languages, and take the word *richten*, which means to *straighten*, from which comes the word *recht*, which means right, as the right way to a place is the straightest way, and the right hand is the hand most used to straighten things. Here in this physical meaning of the German word and our physical use of it, we reach the heart of the matter. When the Germans come to use this word, in a moral sense, they say, “*das rechte soll man thun das unrechte soll man lassen.*” The straight shall a man do; the unstraight shall he leave. Why? Because if he do not he will suffer the consequences of the crooked way. Instead then of telling us that justice is something commanded, let Mr. Mill rather tell us why anything is *ever* commanded? A true command is the expression of the necessary ways in which things go. The man who discovers these ways and states them, he is the legislator in science and in government. By this conception and by this alone we remove from the word “command” that which has no

business there, viz.: the idea of "*will*." God did not will the decalogue into being; He *was* the decalogue, and by that writing on Sinai's top He simply revealed Himself.

Have patience. The practical side of the teaching draws near, and it may come with a force we will not enjoy. Men speak of natural justice, and of civil justice; and, alas, for the weakness of man! this distinction will always abide. Yet it is not of such kind as is often supposed. Justice, as *natural justice*, is nature working, realizing herself, and this by the straightest, shortest, surest ways possible. Your friend falls from an Alpine height, and is destroyed. Do you shake your fist at gravitation, exclaiming, Oh, unjust gravitation! Oh, unmerciful gravitation! Your innocent child falls forward into the fire of the grate, and is destroyed. Do you cry out, Oh, unjust fire! Oh, unmerciful fire! You pass unknowingly the house of contagion, and rise from death's door scarred for life. Do you cry out, Oh, unjust law! Oh, unmerciful law! Ah, you reply, I make none of these outcries; for gravitation, fire, and disease have no ears with which to hear me—if they had, my crying would be long enough and loud enough. Friend, you contemplate only half the truth, even as concerns what you call deaf nature. Your friend slips from an Alpine height and is so bruised and broken that neither you nor any man can restore him; the physician adjusts the bones, anoints the bruises, and leaves him to—whom? To this same nature, and she saves him; bone grows to bone, tissue is renewed, and your

friend greets you as of old. The burned child who could not help but fall is clothed by nature—no man could do it—with a new flesh and a new skin, fairer than before. The diseased germs which you inhale are met by health germs within your body, and what none but nature could do is done—you pass on unharmed. Suppose we had only physical nature to deal with, and our accounts with her were strictly balanced. Violations of her blessed laws, times without number, disaster setting in upon us—righteous disaster—human aid powerless, she saves us, gives us another chance. Why do we see only one side of this magnificent shield? It were as easy, as true, to picture nature tender, merciful, full of pity, as to picture her harsh, stern, inexorable.

Nature is neither one nor the other; neither just nor unjust, neither merciful nor cruel, neither God nor demon. Justice is a term which we use, and rightly use, only of intelligence, of men, and of a self-conscious God. What, then, is human justice? It is man's discernment, statement, and enforcement of the ways in which things act when they realize their nature. Do you wish any other justice than that you be given opportunity to realize yourself, that every effort of yours have its legitimate consequences? Be not a coward. If you make no effort, take the consequences; if you make the wrong effort, take the consequences; if you sin, take the consequences.

When a man rises to the full measure of the conception of life, he is content to take things as they are. He knows that were he what he might be and

ought to be he would be worthy of God. When a man rises to the full measure of the conception of life, he knows that he is in a system, a universe which will work together for his good if he get into line with it. He finds his life in obedience, and, being obedient, he never complains of injustice.

Behold now the place and work of mercy. Mercy is in strict accord with the strictest justice, as she introduces the divine element of loving *sympathy*, loving approval of the ways, the modes of being, loving sympathy for the man who would keep these ways. Here is a mercy worth the while. Not that miserable falsification of mercy which is the ruin of thousands. Here is a mercy which will stop at no sacrifice to aid man in keeping the laws, the ways of his nature, because *in them only* is life. Ah, the sham mercy! The sham mercy born of indolence and sentimentality! It has filled many a prison, and brought many a fellow-creature to his execution.

I shall illustrate and enforce this teaching by the most homely, yet searching examples. A boy, heedless, thoughtless, falls from an upper window; his arm is badly broken. It will be at the cost of severe pain that the straight thing, the just thing, be done that heedless boy. Now, where is the parent whose sham mercy, begotten of indolence and sentiment, would release that child from pain? The merciful parent would hold the child to the pain if it cost the parent's very life. That is true parental love, true mercy, true compassion. Here is the trial of love, of mercy; mercy must yield to no pleading, no cry for relief, but

hold the child—his child—to the surgeon's grasp, till the just thing has been done. Now, if this be so in things of the flesh, how much more is it so in things of the mind and heart. A heedless boy, from heedlessness, not from malice, will not be neat, orderly, or industrious. The very bone and sinew of his mind are being malformed. He is as certain to grow up crippled in intellect as the other is in body. What, again I ask, is parental mercy. It is that loving sympathy with the boy which holds him to neatness, order and industry, at the cost of the parent's very life. When the parent is tired, and worn and anxious, from the burdens of his daily toil, he nevertheless finds time to be truly merciful to his child. He appoints a time for neatness, and order, and study with the boy, and he keeps the appointment. He punishes in mercy and in love, as he straightens the broken arm. One of his severest parental trials is connected with the exercise of this mercy. He not only suffers with the suffering of the child whom he loves, his own mercy is mistaken for cruelty and his love for hatred. This error, however, is as sure to be corrected as the parent's mercy and love are genuine.

Return we now, for a moment, to the conception of mercy previously given. It was said that mercy, as a quality in character, is the product of that personal attitude of sympathy which is the result of individual temptation and suffering. What a progressive deepening and enriching of character! What a turning of darkness into light! What a transformation of suffering and trial into sympathy and love! In character

everything costs, and its cost is in proportion to its value. Air, water and sunlight may be free. Mercy, justice and truth are never bestowed, they are earned.

The citizen of the heavenly kingdom is merciful; animated by a loving compassion, born of his own sorrows, he stands by his fellows to the end.

In that wonderful book, which closes Scripture record, we read, "and I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and I saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven." A beautiful vision truly—but that of which it is a type is better—the invisible city, the inner Jerusalem, which is coming, not down from above, but up from below—up from the sin and the sorrow, the toil and the darkness. Oh, for one glimpse of the inner Jerusalem of character.

*"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they
shall see God."*

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein."

"For He hath founded it upon the seas and established it upon the floods." "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand in His holy place?" "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart." "Create in me a clean heart, O God." I tremble as I approach this beatitude. The reality in the utterance is so real, and at the same time so spiritual, that I hesitate to touch it, as I would hesitate to touch a perfect and a priceless gem.

In none of our studies hitherto have I so much needed your help as now, and the help which I need is an attitude of reverent earnestness. Lay aside, if indeed any of you have put it on, lay aside the *critical* spirit. The critical spirit is rather the edge—the sharp of our minds, than their full-front open-to-all truth. There are truths which our dissecting knife will not lay bare, and these, just these, are our most precious truths. Life escapes all probing and the spirit flies from the microscope, yet life and spirit are our treasures.

In the many years of my relations with students in this class-room I have spoken little of myself, as all who have come before me will bear witness, yet am I persuaded that none know me better than my students. The intimate class-room relations sustained through many years have declared me better than any autobiography could have done. Respecting one of my characteristics, perhaps the central one, I am sure all my students are agreed. They know that I have sought to give positive, not negative, instruction, and that I have given it with all my heart.

The questions that arise in the study of logic, of consciousness and of conscience, are personal questions, and my classes know that I have presented them constantly from their personal, practical aspects. Since this is so, the confession I now intend to make, and the revelation of myself I shall now set forth, may not only be pardoned, but may be received with direct helpfulness in our study this morning. Looking back as far as 1867-1870, as by analyses and papers of various kinds I am enabled to do, I find that I was nothing but a critic, in the small, negative sense of that term. I would hear a discourse or a lecture, and feel a pride in discovering the weak points; I rejoiced if I could show that the logic was shocking, and that the speaker did not know what he was about. I was like a person passing through an orchard in search of defective fruit only. I was like a person walking through a garden of flowers seeing only the worm in the bud. I was like a person walking to and fro among his fellows, and seeing only their sins and their

failings. I knew nothing at all as I ought to have known. Imagine a world all leaden in color—that was my world. Imagine a perpetual day of judgment, that was my day—perpetually—and *I* was the judge. What a heaven-full of truth, of beauty, of joy, I lost. The birds were singing, and I did not hear them; the light was shining, and it did not illumine my path; the Bible was in my hand, and it did not build me up—God forgive me. I studied the Bible three long years in a theological seminary, and never saw God in the burning bush, or heard His still, small voice after the whirlwind, or walked with him in the cool of the day. I parceled off the Bible into sections, and went at it with the hammer and tongs of commentators. I studied the Psalms, the Book of Job, and the Gospel of John as they study a man, a man on the dissecting table. Day before yesterday I stumbled upon a paper of mine concerning the authorship of John's Gospel; the paper is very long, and contains a prodigious amount of hard work, but it does not contain any of the Gospel of John.

All these things I did, and left the other undone. I studied the gates and the floors of the New Jerusalem, but the king in his beauty I never saw. Yet it was not in me to pass through life a scalpel, or a testing tube, or a dissecting knife. The time of my new birth came, and I saw what I would have you see—that this is a positive world, an affirmative world, a world of light, of life, of beauty—a world so wonderful, so glorious, so full of divine realities, that you need but be pure-hearted to see God in it everywhere.

So then you will turn the edge of your mind from our beatitude this morning, and bring your best self, full-fronted, reverent, earnest, to its consideration. The Sistine Madonna is not to be understood by the thin inches of a tape-line.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

And what does our experience teach us about the word "pure" and about its full meaning? In the first place, the sound of the word, as mere sound, is delightful and strengthening; it is like some of the violin notes of Sarasate, a joy to the ear in itself. Entirely apart from the harmony he was producing, Sarasate would breathe out a note so pure, so mild, so tender, that it would pass through your being as the beauty of the Bay of Naples. "Pure," "pure," it is, indeed, a rare sounding word—a choice note from the violin of language. Pass we to its physical associations—pure air—pure water—pure sky. We begin to cross the threshold of its meaning. Air is pure when it is itself alone; water is pure when it is itself alone; the sky is pure when, with no admixture, it gives you back the blue of the sunlight. As we take one further step into the meaning of this rare word, we find that the lesson which its physical significance should teach us is well nigh lost. We find that men have seized upon a half truth contained in its physical application and forgotten the other half. Alas, as is most always the case at such times, the half forgotten is the more important of the two. I said air is pure when it is itself alone—the "alone" is looked at, but the "itself"

is neglected. How great a misfortune has befallen, how great a truth. Purity has come to mean separation, and separation alone, as though the purity of the air meant nothing but its isolation, its aloofness from everything else, as though the purity of water meant nothing but its freedom from pollution. Why have we any care for the purity of water, or of air? Solely that their properties, all of them, may work unhindered. Why, after long cloudiness, do we wish the clouds away—simply to separate them from the sky, or the sky from them? No, indeed; it is that the positive glory of the heavens may over-arch us once again. How great a misfortune, I repeat, has fallen upon mankind by a mistaken conception of purity—this negative conception of separation! Consider the thousands in past and present times whose lives of mistaken duty were seclusion, isolation, separation from the world—a world which was all the time God's world, calling for reverence, love, joy and service. It is as though you should enclose pure water, pure air, pure sunlight *forever* in vessels and between four walls.

But let none of us suppose that, with the closing of the monasteries and the habitations of the nuns this error has been corrected. A searching personal question addresses itself to us: Is *our* conception of purity mere separation from sin? Have we no larger idea of purity than the negative one of isolation? Do we content ourselves with pointing out the bad things which we have not done? Who is the pure man? Consider him in his body—that marvelous temple of the spirit. There is no taint of disease, the death-working germs

are absent. Is this the pure body? No; in *that* body the healthful blood is coursing, urged by the vigorous pulsing of the heart, the lungs are expanding to the sweet, strong air, the muscles are knotting themselves for action, that body is *alive* in every part, and its purity is its life. But man is more than body, he is also *mind*; and who is this pure-minded man—his imaginations, his thoughts are removed from evil—yes, indeed, but is that all? No, his imaginations are of the beautiful, of the sympathetic, of the helpful; his thoughts are of the true and of the ways by which to give that truth expression, his mind is alive in all its parts and its purity, its stainlessness is its life. But body and mind do not compass the measure of man—man is also heart, and as he is in his heart so is he in his body and his mind—a pure-hearted man is altogether pure. When we attempt to apply the negative conception of purity to the human heart, to the *affections*, we realize, as perhaps nowhere else, its utter insufficiency. Affection *will have* its object, from this there is no escape. If we cease to love evil it is that we may love good. Now match me this conception among the conceptions of men. The conception of the pure-hearted man—heart, mind, body, actively pure.

“Blessed, indeed, are such, the pure-hearted, for they shall see God.”

Note the close, organic relation here between pure-heartedness and the beatific vision. What does our highest thought of God hold in it to-day? A holy, infinite consciousness. It is often a sneer of the un-

thinking that men have made their God—from the first rude, horrid carving on wood or stone to the Calvinistic carving in theology.

If there be a God, this is precisely what we should expect. He must be to His creatures what they are capable of receiving—nothing more, nothing less. That men have risen to the conception of a pure, an actively pure and infinite consciousness, is in itself one strong evidence that there is such a supreme consciousness, who has been active in the education of the human race. We forget, far too often, the great truth here presented. You can give no man anything which he is not able to receive. This sounds most simple, yet it is a most searching reality. Until men had raised themselves to the conception of a holy God, their God was not holy; He was almighty, all dread, but not all pure. If now, God be a holy, perfect consciousness, who shall see Him? The pure-hearted, and they alone. This teaching may be justly regarded as the limitation of God's omnipresence. There is no irreverence in saying that God can not enter the circle of your consciousness, except as you become receptive of the good by spiritual development.

You naturally ask for some confirmation of this teaching from daily experience. This appeal to experience is our constant method. Fortunately, in the present instance, illustrations abound on every hand. How is a poem to enter the circle of your consciousness? Some sweet, matchless, nature-verse of Wordsworth; some melodious brook-song of Tennyson;

a thunderous line from Goethe? They are there upon the page, how shall they enter the circle of your consciousness? Is there any power in the heavens or on the earth that can carry them into that charmed circle? When you grow up to them they will be yours, never before. How many persons I have seen among the master-pieces of art in Dresden and in Florence who no more received the message of Gerard Dow, Lorraine, Ruysdael, Corregio, Murrillo, Raphael or Angelo, than did the buttons on their coats. How many men in Cincinnati get a message from the sun, and its accompanying hosts that sweep through the awful spaces? Our minds grow dizzy at the immensity and power of the message. Ah, the trouble is with us, not with Wordsworth, with us, not with Tennyson, with us, not with Goethe. May it not be that the trouble is with us, not with God?

I said illustrations here are abundant. There may be those among our fellows who have not met Wordsworth, or Goethe, or Raphael, yet have they perhaps found a *friend*, some one upon whom they rely, some one between whose heart and their own a constant affection is flowing. What does this mean? Simply, that between you and your friend there are living points of resemblance. You touch one another; you are not brought together, or held together, you come together as like to like. This illustration, I think, best serves to make known the deeper truth, viz.: that all such resemblance is of the heart. Your hearts are the same, and *therefore* you are one. Differ widely in

judgment, in experience, in attainments, if you love the same things you are at one. A *sincere* man—and sincerity, you know, is always of the heart—a sincere man goes to and fro in search of his fellow, and, because sincere men do not abound, he makes many enemies and few friends. If, now, God be pure-hearted, is it not demonstrated that only the pure-hearted shall see Him?

What now is this beatific vision? What is this sight of God? I said, at the beginning, that our beatitude was very real and very spiritual—its spirituality is the height of its reality, for our most real possessions are the most spiritual.

In approaching the living light of our beatitude, I again hesitate and know not what to say. How shall the most spiritual of all truths be made to reveal its supreme reality? Aid me as I make the attempt.

Did it never seem strange to you that men have located God somewhere in heaven—away off beyond the stars? Did it never seem strange to you that men should suppose a *change of place* would bring them to God? Why is God shut out from this world and kept at an immense distance as a king to be visited when we set out on what we call our *immortal* journey, forgetting that if there be immortality we are on that journey now. There is not a sadder commentary upon our earthly course between the cradle and the grave than the fact that we believe we must wait till it is all over before seeing God. If our earthly course had been a pure-hearted course we would have seen God throughout its entire extent. Is there anything

in this physical world of ours that keeps God away? Is He ashamed of His own mountains, His own wide, deep sea, His pure, sweet air, His sunlight? Is He ashamed of His spring-time when the dear grass puts forth, and the buds swell, and the warmth steals over all? Is He ashamed of the night-wind falling from the snow-clad peaks refreshing the plains? Is He ashamed of the moon-light that silvers the clouds and glides among the trees, and softens the tiger's breast and bathes the young birds in their sleep. Is He ashamed, ashamed of man, of you and of me? Perhaps He does not walk with us in the cool of the day, because He can not. Do you know whether there are any places among the habitations of men not fit for God to visit? If you would not take your sister there, or your innocent brother, ought God to go? And what are these places among the habitations of men? They are the places of the vile hearted, they are feeble symbols of base passions. As though a change of sphere would bring us to God; as though this world were not good enough for God to walk to and fro in it and commune with His like, His children.

And now let us make one nearer approach to the central light of our beatitude. To see God is not to behold Him, imaged on the retina of flesh. *That* seeing will *never* be had. Why then do we read "shall *see* God?" Because sight is our highest *sense*—mark my words, highest *sense*—and the experience which the pure-hearted have of God is like unto vision in its clearness and preciousness.

Again we ask, as always in these studies, what has our *experience* to offer respecting this teaching? We find it strictly confirmatory. *The* truths of all existence are invisible—never imaged on the retina of flesh. Who ever saw *force*, which is pulsing through all things, large and small—force that binds all things, and urges all things, and is everywhere. No retina ever caught it, and yet, for the scientist, it is omnipresent and omnipotent. Who ever saw consciousness—who ever saw pain, or joy, or sorrow, or remorse—who ever saw love, or truth, or self-sacrifice? You have seen your friend? Not so. Him you never saw—will never see; his form, that is to say, his body; his voice, that is to say, noise by the moving of the vocal cords; his touch, that is to say muscular contraction, all these have wrought upon your senses exactly as his corpse may do. But him whom you loved you never saw—will never see. A person said to me, in 1867, I saw with the eye of flesh a plain and slight form, I heard with the ear of flesh a clear and gentle voice, I saw this form and heard this voice many times, the spirit I never saw till form had perished and voice been silenced for twenty years. Then I had a vision like experience of that spirit; I saw its worth, its perfection; and, added he, I see it always. Not first that which is spiritual, but that which is fleshly—afterward that which is spiritual.

The pure-hearted, and they only see God. Within the slight frame, and behind the gentle voice was the spirit, *as* spirit *forever* invisible to the retina of flesh, yet twenty years afterward was this spirit seen in its

full glory. Upon what truth have we come in this searching experience. The slight form and the gentle voice *could not* declare their soul. What form shall God assume to make Himself known? If the wonders of this universe do not declare Him, what will or can? Would you receive Him if He came in shape visible to the outward eye? Not so; that very physical visibility would demonstrate to you that God was not present. You have infinity before you—is it visible, mirrored on the small disk of the retina? That which you can see looking upward along the sky or downward through the microscope you name finite, but do you not always see by means of it a beyond, an infinitely great and an infinitely small? Who sees this infinity most clearly, and realizes it as with a vision, like distinctness? You have an infinite power before you, do you see it with the outward eye? You have before you an infinite order, each seed yielding fruit after its kind, and all the worlds pursuing their appointed courses. Do you see God? Are you as my friend who had before him the form and the voice, but saw no spirit? What shall we say of the pure-hearted who have, perhaps, after twice twenty years of waiting and upbuilding, found God here and now, seen the spirit of it all, and are assured that the King in His beauty is with them every day.

*"Blessed are those that work peace, for they shall
be called the children of God."*

"No war or battle's sound
Was heard the world around.
The idle spear and shield were high uphung,
The hooked chariot stood
Unstained with hostile blood."

"But peaceful was the night
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began."

"Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother; and a man's foes shall be they of his own household."

As we watch the unfolding of the new religion, especially, after it became a world-power, it seems that Christ described himself and his mission better than did Milton in his stately hymn of Nativity. In the name of Christ, how many wars were waged, how many families divided, how many cruelties practiced? Did Christ work peace? Has Christianity been a peace-working religion? How strangely indissoluble the association of this idea of peace with Christ and

with Christianity. Such association is not due to Christ's language about himself, or to early Christian literature. In the ninth chapter of Isaiah there is a remarkable utterance, which runs as follows: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

These words were early classed among the Old Testament declarations that described the Messiah, the expected deliverer of the people, as the Prince of Peace. In later New Testament writings God is called the God of Peace, and Paul even commands peace when he says to the Colossians "let the peace of God dwell in your hearts." We find there that Christ and Christianity are inseparably associated with the idea of peace, and that this association endures despite persecutions, divisions and wars in the name of the Prince of Peace. Let us say that this is the indestructible ideal toward which men have been lifting their worn faces as they have struggled on in the tempest. Sometimes this ideal has been revealed in something like its matchless reality, and the toilers have been refreshed. It was once my fortune to ride through southern Ireland; starting from Macrome early in the morning I rode the entire day, and my course lay through a land of complete desolation. There was silence, but no peace. Nature was dead, and not a trace of her loveliness remained. To ride many days through such dreariness would endanger

the mind. Late in the afternoon the oppression threatened to become unbearable with the approach of night, but I noticed that my path widened somewhat, and not far beyond I saw a bend of the way. Hastening on I turned and entered an abode of perfect peace—I was at Glengariff, at the head of Bantry Bay. The opening waters of ocean disclosed the sun just sinking into their depths, and the long, red light rose and fell with the stirring of the sea. Trees were on either side of me, with a foliage that was perfect in color and texture, the grass partook of this richness and invited to rest. Nowhere in the world is the soothing power of the color green disclosed as in southern Ireland. Drummond has spoken of a natural law in the spiritual world, let us learn that there is a spiritual message in the natural world. On the morrow I was to ride again through scenes as desolate as those that lay behind me, but I would ride refreshed, I had rested in the abode of peace.

Blessed are they that *work* peace, for they shall be *called* the children of God." Blessedness—we have not, I trust, forgotten its meaning. It is the joy that accompanies the belief that our best selves are being realized. For this blessedness we should work peace, peace within and peace without, then we shall be *called* children of God, that is, we shall be *recognized* as His children, being such, we shall be *called* such. Let us now endeavor to catch some glimpse of the reality which all citizens of the heavenly kingdom are accomplishing, are working, and must work. The true synonym for peace is *unity*; not rest, or repose.

A land that is at peace is not an idle land, a land asleep, it is a land of peaceful activity. A man who is at peace with himself is not a man buried in slumber; he is a man harmoniously, peacefully *active*. I say the synonym for peace is unity, and when we consider what unity necessarily involves, we reach the inner meaning of peace. Unity can exist only where there is *variety* and *difference*. There can be unity in this class, because there is abundant *variety* in the class. If you were all Methodists, or all Baptists, believing exactly the same things, in exactly the same way, and to exactly the same degree, you would present a fine array of *units*, without a vestige of *unity*. The dreariness of my ride through Southern Ireland was because the country was a unit. The peace at Glengariff was due to the interblending variety—sea, and rock, and grass, and trees, and sky, clouds and sun, were there, therefore, unity—peace—was possible. It is, indeed, strange that a lesson so plain as this is so slowly learned. Peace demands for itself difference and disagreement. Instead, therefore, of endeavoring to make all people think as we do, and to copy our example, we should aim at the fullest development of their *individuality*. We should see to it, as far as lies in our power, that they do not think as we do, but they think for themselves—each for himself. Observe the character this calls for in him who works peace. I name it the impersonal character, perhaps I should say the non-personal character. The character I am now endeavoring to present is not lacking in personality, but is entirely lacking in the desire to force that

personality against the world. Midas was reported to have had the golden touch; everything, bread, wine, cakes, when taken up by him became gold, and he was in sure way to die of too much gold (as many have died since his day). Many people, I had well-nigh said most people, have the *self*-touch; everything with which they come into contact is changed into a garment, or a ring, or a trinket, or a trumpet, for the display of self. I certainly have heard of, and, at times, I fancy I have seen, men, who used Jesus of Nazareth, and the invisible God, and the hour of prayer, for their own embellishment. I have seen men use the cause of education for their own glory, and I have thought that some of them were afflicted with the Midas self-touch, so that everything upon which they even so much as looked gave back their names in large letters, obscuring the noble cause. These men can not work peace. Those who work peace strive with all their powers to develop others, to make them realize their own best selves.

And peace demands variety and disagreement. How much the kingdom of Heaven and the reign of the God of Peace would have been hastened had the Christian world learned this lesson in the earlier centuries. The attempt would not have been made to burn one creed into men, or pour it in melted lead down their throats, or tattoo it into them with the Iron Virgin of Nuremberg. Consider the bearing of this truth upon the attempt at a congress of the churches of Christendom. It is proposed to write a creed for the church universal, and it is expected by elimination of denomi-

national differences to secure church unity, church peace. A more hopeless endeavor could not, in my opinion, be endeavored. If the church Solons could write such a creed, and hang up one over the pulpit of each church in Christendom, there would be no more church unity than in a row of suspended peas. Let each church be itself—true to the convictions which gave it origin; then there may be peace among the churches, unity in Christendom.

But you ask, are we to understand that difference and disagreement *are* peace; if so, you would say, the world must have a great deal of peace. I have not said that difference and disagreement *are* peace, I have said that there can be no peace without them, they are the materials out of which peace must be made, if you will not allow them to exist, you can not work peace. Would you select from a Beethoven symphony the one note or strain *you* like best, and blot out the others? Why not? The symphony, with its unity, harmony, would be destroyed. Yes, indeed, and so will any peace you try to effect, if you blot out differences and key everybody to your note. What a world it would be—*one* note sounding everywhere all the time! But you press for an answer. Since difference and disagreement are not peace, yet necessary to it, what is the source of peace, and how are difference and disagreement unified *in peace*? Peace is made by an *informing spirit*. Illustrations are abundant. The spirit of Beethoven pervades, unifies the infinite variety of his music. My own ear is the least trained in musical matters, but I have recognized that mighty

soul, tender as a lover and stormier than the sea, over and over again, when I did not know that he was coming before me. Beethoven is in his music, and so it has unity. After seeing the touch of Murillo, I knew him from afar, as I entered a strange gallery; DaVinci, Angelo, Raphael, Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning, how wide the variety, how great the difference in the subjects with which each dealt, yet the informing spirit of each gave unity to all. But we need not go so far afield. In the Spring of 1891 an immense audience assembled in the Pike Opera House; young and old and middle aged were there, men and women were there, most varied nationalities were represented there, differences multiplied a thousand fold were there, and little by little, utterance by utterance, the orator unified them, his speech informed them, and it was as though he addressed one human race. Such is the unifying, harmonizing power of the true orator.

Prior to our civil war we had variety, difference, but very little unity, and no true peace. The momentous question of that dread time was whether an informing spirit would bind State to State and send a united North against an already united South. There was such a spirit of patriotism, and an army was created from the most diverse classes and conditions of men. Untrained, undisciplined, ignorant of the smell of powder or sound of shell, these men became one, and opened, at fearful cost, a broad highway for peace. The North saw the South in its own far away and peculiar land, and understood it as never before;

the South met the North and learned that beyond the line there were also men, so place was given for the unifying forces that work peace—the silent forces of reason and affection.

Have we yet any glimpse of the wondrous ideal? A peaceful home. Who has seen it? Husband and wife, parents and children, diversity of sex, age, temperament, endowment, taste; a peaceful home where utmost variety is blended in one whole by the informing spirit of affection.

Blessed indeed are they that work peace. How magnificent this ideal—peace. Consider it as realized in the individual man, the proper harmony of his varied powers by an informing spirit. In my case yonder stands a marvel of the French mechanician's art—an enlarged half of the human brain. I could take this half brain to pieces before you and the distinct parts would fill my table top, yet this is only the gross, coarse structure of the brain. I could select one fiber of the countless thousands, and by the microscope's piercing eye reveal its separate parts of central thread (itself composed of minutest fibrillæ), the soft substance which envelopes it, and then the surrounding sheath. I could show you cells in number apparently as countless as the sea-sands, each with its distinctive parts. This brain, so varied in parts and diverse in arrangement, is the source of an informing, unifying power, that prevades the entire body and makes it one. The healthy brain is the peace of the body. Blessed are they that work such peace. How much knowledge, how much courage, how much reso-

lution, how much industry, how much patience, go to the establishment of this physical peace.

The mind, with its sensations and their innumerable variations, its recollections, its imaginings, its thoughts. What gives true peace to the human mind? The informing spirit of truth. Let not my sensations deceive me, my recollections mislead me, my imaginings be baseless, or my thoughts unverified; there is no peace of mind except by the informing spirit of love for truth.

Blessed are they that work this peace. Blessed are the teachers and students from the beginning of our race to the end of it, who will have the truth, nothing but the truth, and who work the peace which truth alone can give. How much heroism of self-denial goes to the working of this peace?

Last, highest, deepest, for which all else has being—the emotional life of man. Behold the variety of this life—love, hope, fear, ambition, pride, jealousy, joy, sorrow, anguish, indignation, anger, rage, anticipation, surprise, delight, wonder, awe, reverence, satisfaction, contentment, and their opposites, benevolence, gratitude, malevolence, ingratitude, heart-lust, bitterness, hatred, and alone by itself, *remorse*. There is no need that I continue this naming of our emotions, each of which has its shades of coloring and intensity. How *can* there be peace for such a being? Lightning and whirlwind, and tempest there may well be. Peace—peace within the human soul? Yes, the peace of God, that passeth understanding; and by what informing spirit? The spirit of these beatitudes.

You never can unify man's awful nature with the unity of peace, except by the spirit of these beatitudes.

Consider such a being as I have described unified, put at peace by pure-heartedness, gentleness, a hunger and thirst for righteousness. Is anything plainer or truer than that here is the secret of man's peace? Is he pure-hearted? Then let his senses have their play, let his tongue taste, his hand handle, his ear hear, and his eye see, there will be the unity and the peace of purity in all his sensation life. You can not break him into discord by sights or sounds, or tastes. Is he pure-hearted? Then let his recollections come and go, let fever bring back the long-forgotten past, the unity and the peace of purity will be over all. Is he pure-hearted? Then let him surrender to the most luxuriant imagination of which he is capable, the pictures of his combining will be new creations unified in their infinite variety by the peace of purity. When we enter the sacred place of man's emotions, we find a demonstration of the truth I am now enforcing. He is seen, known to be the prey of every gust of feeling, a creature of discord and war, unless put at peace with himself by the spirit which pervades these beatitudes. Who is the man who can endure the stress and the strain of life, and preserve the unity of peace within himself? Is it the man of wealth, of knowledge, or of power? In these there lies no peace; wealth is imperiled, and all the discord of uncertainty is connected with its possession; knowledge faileth, its limits are fixed at the very places beyond which we yearn to go; power is a continual temptation, and temptation is unrest,

discord, distress. What have we left that can never fail, never be taken away, may always increase, is ours to possess and to bestow? Is it not the informing, unifying spirit of character?

What a picture that is—the Pharisee and the Publican. “Lord, I thank Thee that I am not as other men; extortioners, idolators, or even as this Publican.” And, with downcast eyes, the Publican exclaims: “Be merciful to me, a sinner.” The lesson here is simple, let us not learn more than would be taught. The man who possesses the inward peace of character has a right to thank God that he is not as other men, torn by contending passions and cleft in twain by sin.

Being thus at peace with himself, man is fitted to work peace in the world of his influence. God is called the God of Peace, and men who work peace are His children in peculiar closeness of meaning.

Consider what a universal peace on this earth would mean, and what it would demand. There would be no striving of man against man, but of man for man; no striving of nation against nation, but of nation for nation. Such world-peace would need for its realization only one condition—a universal willingness to abide by the judgments of reason and the promptings of affection, instead of force. Is it an unseemly thing to ask that the being who makes reason his boast should abide by reason? Is it an unseemly thing to ask that the German people, whose pride is in the gymnasias and universities, should learn the art of war no more; should be the active apostle of the silent forces of reason and affection? Is it an un-

seemly thing to ask that this people take the distinguished position of a nation that works peace, that is above insulting and being insulted? I sometimes feel that such an example would convert the world, if by nothing else, by very shame.

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

There follow this beatitude two verses which make a direct application of the teaching to the disciples, and in so doing declare the nature of the persecution which, when borne for righteousness sake, brings the kingdom of heaven.

I, therefore, read the verses applying to the beatitude: "Blessed are you when men shall revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." "Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

Our study is concerned with this question, what is the organic necessary connection between persecution and the joy of self-realization. Does experience reveal such connection? There is one fact connected with this teaching which, though it lies open to view, needs heavy emphasis. We are not told that *all* persecution works blessedness, the joy of self-realization; on the contrary, we are explicitly told, that only one kind of persecution is of this upbuilding character, viz.: the persecution which is due to the righteousness within us. If we are righteous, if we hunger

and thirst after righteousness, we are certain to be persecuted, and *that* persecution brings the blessedness attendant on self-realization. It is interesting to remember that this thought was underscored by the greatest of the four great Fathers of the Latin Church, St. Augustine, when he said: "It is not punishment that makes a martyr, but his cause." Augustine's best years as a theologian were given to warfare against heresies, and it became very natural for him to say: "Oh, you heretics, do not quote this eighth beatitude against us; you are not martyrs simply because you suffer, you must suffer for righteousness before you are martyrs; you are not suffering for righteousness, but for your naughty heresies." There has been some activity against the heretics of late—not a circumstance however compared with that busy time between 350–430 A. D. I am afraid those good old times will never be repeated—nevertheless Augustine was right—it is the righteousness in a man and his suffering therefor that makes him a martyr and brings the heavenly kingdom. We should not, however, for one moment, suppose that we can escape the present application of our beatitude because heresy hunting has somewhat abated in ardor.

A man can have a fad and go and flock by himself in a corner and be persecuted; this will not bring the heavenly kingdom. A woman can espouse a cause, render herself intensely obnoxious, intensely distressing in her appearance, mount a platform, and rail herself into the notoriety of persecution; this will not pass her into the heavenly kingdom. There are persons of

such a cross-grain constitution that they are never happy unless pelted with hard words. It is not then because you are persecuted that you are blessed—but because you are persecuted for righteousness. After this preliminary and practical consideration, we approach our general subject, and in so doing remark that its central, formative truth is the necessary antagonism between sin and righteousness, or speaking concretely, between the sinner and the righteous man. There was no truer sentence ever written than the following: "They that will live godly in the world shall suffer persecution." This, of course, does not mean that persecution is arbitrarily inflicted upon their godliness, it does mean that because of the radical antagonism between good and evil all righteousness must experience the enmity of sin, a good man is and must be hated by a bad man.

Now, the first thing that strikes a person, after hearing such a statement, is, that it is the purest sort of idealism; theoretically, perhaps, true enough, but practically out of the question—unreal, false. A bad man does not hate a good man *because* of his goodness. There is just the amount of idealism in this that there is in all realism, and no more. You can not find an absolutely imperfect apple, though you can come close to it; you can not find an absolutely imperfect flower, though you can come close to it. You draw sufficiently near the imperfect rose to detect its characteristics, and to determine their relation to the perfect rose; you see that the one *must* be the negation of the other—if they were conscious they would

necessarily antagonize each other. Let us suppose that we can not find the absolutely bad man, the man who always hates the good man because of his goodness, the man who never sees anything desirable in goodness, the man who never feels or has felt the stirrings of remorse. My experience of men is limited, but if I were to be started with a lantern after the absolutely good man or absolutely bad man, I would begin the latter quest first, and with a measure of expectation. However, let us admit the ideal character of these ideals. Have we the bad man sufficiently with us to leave no doubt that when he is himself he hates the good man on account of his goodness? Have we the bad man sufficiently with us to leave no doubt that he is, from time to time, the persecutor of the good man because he hates him? Is there, as matter of fact, any such thing as *jealousy* in the world? Not perfect jealousy, not the supreme ideal of jealousy, but enough of the article for *practical purposes*. Did it ever occur to you that jealousy very nearly rounds out the plan and dimensions of the bad man? The jealous man, the envious man, feels pain at the sight of another's superiority or success; this pain is the root from which there grow, with great rapidity, hatred, malignity, and then a determination to ruin the superior. Is it true that any man ever feels pain at beholding another's superiority? Here we are at the center of the matter—another's excellence is our pain. Why? Because we are what we are, and not what we ought to be. We ought to rejoice in *all* excellence. Persecution stands revealed in its essential nature, as

an attack upon that which *ought to be*, this attack, as we have seen, being the result of pain at another's excellence. There is a further general characteristic of persecution which should be distinctly recognized; it is not only an attack upon that which ought to be, it is a persistent attack. There is here no momentary outburst of passion, but a steady following through in a manner to injure, vex, afflict. *Such* following is monstrous, even though him whom we follow is a sinner. We have no more right than God has to desire the death of the sinner. Such following becomes appalling when the one whom we pursue is righteous; to make a persistent attack upon a man *because* of his excellence, or, rather, because of the pain we feel at his excellence, is surely the unpardonable sin, if there be one.

This conception of persecution should, I think, be always before us when we read the history of what is known as religious persecution. In other words, we ought to consider that a great deal of human conduct, which from its outward side appears persecution, was from its inward side the discharge of duty. We are ever inclined to neglect this double-sidedness of conduct. If Paul told the truth about himself, in other words, if he believed he was doing God service by hurrying Christians to prison, then was he not a persecutor? The historian assures us that it is extremely difficult to determine the facts of history, how much more so to determine motives. From its inward side the amount of persecution that has appeared in human history is measured by the amount

of persistent following after righteous men to injure and afflict them, when the following was due to pain at their excellence. You say this will diminish very much the red color from the page of history. What then? Who is under contract to make human nature worse than it is? If to-day, in our midst, any can be found who afflict another because of the pain which his excellence occasions, we may rest assured that it was no less so in the past. We may be confident that not all of those who cried, "Away with Him! Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" were following the plain dictates of conscience. We may be certain that for some it was the pain of His excellence that moved their tongues to slander, and their hands to drive the nails. And here we are confronted with one of the most momentous facts of life: a man can conscientiously be the cause of suffering to others, a suffering which they nowise deserve, while his own moral integrity is not thereby sullied to the least degree, his soul being open to a life-long regret with the coming of fuller knowledge. I do not know any approach from which the subject of education receives such solemn emphasis as from the one we are now considering. Education is so to equip man with regulative principles in all the departments of life, that when he follows his conscience he shall do the right thing from both sides of the act, the outward and the inward.

If I have truly declared the nature of persecution, we are prepared to note its leading forms—these are three, and are clearly stated in the Bible verses I have read. "When men shall revile you, and persecute

you, and say all manner of evil against you *falsely*." Abuse, violence and slander are the forms of persecution which, when endured for righteousness sake, bring the blessedness of self-realization. Abuse is the weapon of the vulgar, and we are all, I doubt not, beyond its use. Violence is not good form; we do not now persecute by fire, or thumbscrews, or dungeons. It is possible that the world has been raised to a plain where the brutality of brutality is understood. The optimist reads history as a moral advance; the pessimist as a moral decline, and if ever human judgments are determined by temperament, these contradictory judgments are so determined. One thing is certain, the violent forms of persecution are forever past. It will never again be possible to consume a good man's body by burning fagots, but it is possible, as never before in the history of this world, to consume his body, and his reason, and his hope, by the invisible fires of an invisible persecution, kept alive through years of duration. The devil* is not dead. I wish I could see the signs of mortal sickness about him that some claim to discover. The finer forms of persecution were not known in the rosy times of the fagot, as the finer forms of nerve agony were unknown. The growth of civilization, according to the medical men, has been accompanied by an increase of unstable nerve systems, and this does not mean simply that there has attended upon civilization an enlarged possibility of suffering, it means that there has been

*The cultured who object to the word "devil" will kindly substitute the term "spirit of evil."

an actual intensification of suffering—for an unstable nerve system is not a passive affair, it is active and constant torment. Unless, therefore, the *heart* of man has been changed by the process of the suns—not simply his thoughts widened—we would not be justified in saying that persecution has abated.

It is when we consider the third form of persecution, keeping our eyes the while wide open, that the pessimist is in danger of gathering us in. The third form of persecution is slander. To slander is to injure maliciously by spreading a false report, or one about which there is or can be the slightest doubt. I do not know of any monograph on slander, I mean from the side of its historical evolution, yet it certainly has reached scientific expression. As burglary has evolved from the bludgeon and the knife to the delicate scientific appliances of the professional cracksman, so persecution has evolved from the coarse violence of hot lead to the skillful appliances of the accomplished slanderer. The devil, pointing with his tapering forefinger to these things, may well say to the optimist: "I, too, have not been idle."

The accomplished slanderer is not a courageous, open, respectable liar (I speak by comparison), he generally does his work with a half-truth upon which his cowardly nature rests when called to account. There is no need, however, to attempt to do the slanderer justice. God alone can do that—a work, I sincerely hope, He will not fail to perform.

The fundamental question connected with the last beatitude should now lie open to view. In what way

is persecution for righteousness sake necessarily related to self-realization? If our general position, as above expressed, be correct, we are not now concerned with the suffering which a righteous man experiences, but only with a particular *portion* of that suffering. Those Christians whom Paul imprisoned undoubtedly suffered, and this because they were Christians, yet they were not persecuted, since Paul was not a persecutor. They were afflicted, but as the guilt of persecution did not rest upon Paul, so the distress of persecution did not come upon them. My statements undoubtedly narrow the meaning of persecution; I am confident its meaning should be narrowed. Let us suppose that, as a physician, I receive a patient who relates to me his symptoms, and favors me with his judgment as to his needs. I firmly believe that I detect error in his relation of symptoms and in his self-prescribed remedies. He would allow himself a physical freedom which, I believe, would cause his death. Had I the power, what would be my duty? If I deal with him as my firm conviction prompts, he will suffer long and severely. Manifestly, only one thing can prevent my action—the lack of power. The fact that I am wrong and that he is right nowise affects the situation. Suppose I were the only recognized medical authority in the class of diseases from which he suffers; suppose I believed that this high position was justly mine—the result of close study and wide practice, suppose I believed that God had called me in audible voice to this position, and given me the divine wisdom and the divine remedy; how could I perse-

cute my patient by any suffering necessary to administer the remedy? Could his suffering be called persecution, even after it had been clearly established that I was not summoned by God to treat such disease, and had misjudged the case completely? You see the comparison to be drawn. There is no sickness like the soul sickness of sin—there is no death like the eternal death of the soul. If to me there is committed from on high the unerring vision to detect this sickness and the only remedy for its overthrow, *can* I persecute? If you have this mortal sickness of the soul, and *will* not take the remedy, and I have both remedy and power, when we meet in the New Jerusalem you will bless me with a ceaseless blessing, and the agony of my red-hot pincers will be forgotten in the joy of everlasting deliverance. Such has been the belief of thousands in times past, respecting the soul-sickness of man and its remedy. And the bitterness to the student of history is due not alone to the red mark of sin—it is due to the awful, the inevitable slowness of events. There are two cries: How long, oh Lord, shall the wicked prosper? How long, oh Lord, shall the good man err in his ignorance?

There has been wickedness enough in the name of religion—there is more than enough to-day. There has been persecution enough for righteousness sake—there is more than enough to-day. Let there be just judgment.

How often, how often has excellence been hated for the pain it caused, and persecution arisen for righteousness own sake. Such persecution is indeed the

blessedness of every heavenly citizen—certainly during his earthly journey. Such persecution is the sure evidence of his character; if he were not righteous he would not be persecuted. They that will live godly in this world shall suffer persecution.

It will be remembered that when our definition of blessedness was given we pointed out that this interpretation allowed the experience of blessedness in the midst of suffering. Blessedness is the joy that always attends the conviction that our best self is being realized. When we are hated and made to suffer for the goodness that is within us, let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, let us take fresh courage and cleave fast to the right. Such persecution is a demonstration of our character, let us count it all joy that we are worthy such persecution. How few are worthy of it! How few are truly persecuted, truly hated and afflicted for the righteousness that is within them! Which is equivalent to saying, how few are truly righteous! This exclamation holds with respect to all the excellencies of the heavenly citizen. How few are poor in spirit; how few gentle; how few heart-pure?

Worthy to be persecuted, worthy to be hated for what I *am*. Mark the depth of this reality. Not for what I have, either of knowledge, power or money, am I hated, but because I hold fast to mine integrity. May God find each of us worthy of persecution.

And in this wise do the Beatitudes close, finishing a picture of character, the character of the heavenly citizen. Whether there be a continued existence for you and me beyond the grave, one thing is certain:

if we possess the character described in the Beatitudes we are worthy the name heavenly citizens, and are in a heavenly kingdom. The Latin Father, whom I have named, clearly saw that the Beatitudes describe *one* character, not eight characters. I read from his exposition of the Sermon on the Mount:

“These are not different persons that will be differently blessed; it is not that one, being pure in heart, will see God; another, being merciful, will obtain mercy; and a third, who, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, will be filled. But these are different sides of the same character, with the capacities of blessedness which are linked to each, so that, while it is true that, because the man is pure in heart, and not because he is merciful, or meek, or a peacemaker, he will *see God*; and, again, because he is *merciful*, and not because he is pure in heart, that he will obtain mercy, yet, it is the same person throughout to whom all the promises belong. Just as were it said, Happy are they that have feet, for they can walk; happy are they that have tongues, for they can speak, we should not think of one man having a tongue, another feet, but only to each limb attribute its appropriate function. It is true, indeed, that these graces, like grapes of the same cluster, may ripen some earlier than others, maybe some of them finer and fuller than others. Yet do they not the less hang upon the same stalk, and the same process of ripening is going forward in all.”

The Prayer of Our Lord.

How much more real is the invisible than the visible, the intangible than the tangible, the inaudible than the audible. We fold around the outer world the color-consciousness within us, and this, with all its varieties of kind and shading, comes from the invisible constitution of matter and the invisible workings of brain. The sweetest of violin notes have their reality in the inaudible changes of molecules, whose combinations stir the air with inaudible tremors, that in turn carry inaudible nerve excitations to the brain. The thought no man seeth, the feeling no man toucheth, the will no man heareth. I sometimes try to realize this world within a world, this city within a city, this man within a man. A heavenly city within an earthly city, heavenly citizens within earthly citizens—the glory of the Lord God shining within His children.

We have drawn near these higher, these invisible realities through the Beatitudes. How exceeding precious must be that invisible soul whose pure-heartedness sees God, whose gentleness possesseth the eternal Canaan, whose mercifulness bringeth sympathy to the

securing of justice. The heaven within the buffeted earth-struggler—the heaven of character, invisible, inaudible, intangible—forever so—yet is no reality to be compared with it or exchanged for it.

Is not the hour for prayer fully come? Who, catching, were it but a glimpse of his own best self and the heavenly glory thereof, could fail to pray?

And so we pass from the Beatitudes to the Lord's Prayer.

Shall we endeavor to read this prayer with our *spirits*? Fear not, the mind—reason—shall be given full opportunity to deal with this prayer, and with prayer as such. Surely, it can do us no harm, the heavenly citizen the meanwhile summoning us, to endeavor to find out what prayer is, by—praying. Is any one ashamed to pray? any one too cultured to pray? Hark! do I hear a voice saying, "For me there is no God. I will not, can not pray." Friend, you do not need to believe in God before you enter into the meaning of prayer. Are you sincere; are you finite; are you in trouble; are you lonely; are you appointed to die? Then can you realize what the Lord's prayer would be to you, if it were yours. Have you any realization of those excellencies of character whose possession would declare you a citizen of the earthly heaven? Then you can know the meaning of prayer.

"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil."

What, in thus praying, have we done? We have looked up—and all prayer is a looking up. We have not said or implied that God was away off yonder—in heaven—and we away down here on earth. Our Father which art in heaven, means, first of all, and necessarily, a looking up. And what says our experience about this looking up? Is it healthful, helpful, is it necessary? The child looks up to the parent, and when this is impossible, or comes to be impossible, the child is without a parent; the pupil looks up to the teacher, and when this ceases, the teacher is dead. I hold it to be the first pulsation of the glory of prayer that it is a looking up of the soul.

Our Father.—These words imply consanguinity between Him to whom we pray and ourselves. I have used a physical word for a spiritual reality. There is kinship between God and man, or man can not pray to God. Matthew Arnold is true in saying that in religion we necessarily betake ourselves to imagery and to poetry. This does not make of religion a fancy or a poem. The highest truths are incommunicable, except by the purest symbolism of art. The mission of art is indeed divine, it is not only to tell truth, but to tell the highest truths. The words "*Our Father*" symbolize the most precious conception in the possession of man. This conception is the *kinship*—*kindredship* between our best selves and the ruling power of the universe. In spiritually praying these words, "Our Father which art in heaven," we have looked up and out of ourselves toward

another spirit. Prayer, therefore, in its first aspects is opposed to pantheism. The Pantheist does not separate God from the universe, and prayer is for him necessarily a turning in of the spirit upon itself, not a pressing up of his spirit toward another spirit, a higher, holier spirit, like in kind, but distinct and superior.

"Hallowed be thy name."—What is the spiritual reality of *this* petition? We are certainly not praying *for* God. We are not asking that He be hallowed or made holy. The holiness of God is the heart of our *conception* of God. We can not imagine His holiness diminished or increased.

"Hallowed be thy name."—We are not asking that the *word* God be made holy; this request, if it had *any* meaning, would be simply a petition against blasphemy.

We *are* asking that the name, *i. e.*, the revelation of *Himself*, which God has anywhere and everywhere made, shall become more and more holy to man, *"Hallowed be thy name."* Let, oh God, the mountains and the valleys be hallowed to us as declarations of the majesty of Thy thought and power. Let the starry night be hallowed unto us as the matchless symbolism of Thy infinity.

Let the soaring, singing lark and the falling sparrow and the opening Spring and the ripening Summer be hallowed unto us, as tokens of Thy beauty, thy care and Thy faithfulness. Let the love of earthly parents (how pure, intense, persistent), the love of husband

and wife, the love of friend, be hallowed unto us, oh God, our Father, as tried revelations of Thy love. Let the awful sweep of human history be hallowed unto us, as the expression of Thy purpose, accomplishing itself in the hearts and deeds of men. Let the good of all ages and races and climes be hallowed unto us Thy children, declaring each in his own language and in his own way, Thy perfect goodness. Let the man of sorrows, our Elder Brother, be hallowed unto us as Thy *sympathy* and Thy *mercy*. Let all the universe, Thy one great name, be hallowed unto us as the utmost communicable of Thy exhaustless Being. Oh, God, our Father, art thou not everywhere, where are the good and the great and the beautiful and the tender and the pure and the true? Hallowed be they unto us — Thy name.

Thy Kingdom Come.—Thine, indeed, Oh God, our Father—the kingdom of the pure-hearted, the gentle, the mourners, the workers of peace, the persecuted for righteousness sake. Let this kingdom come—but have we not been told that it has already come, that we need not wait the death transformation to enter as heavenly citizens the kingdom of heaven? Has not an invisible heaven on this visible earth been proclaimed? Yesterday, on the street, I passed a blind man, blind from birth, yet the kingdom of light had long time come; men had walked in this kingdom, and its glories had filled their journeying through the centuries, to him, poor man, the kingdom of light had never come. The kingdom of heaven

has not come to all. I have seen men during this week who were blind to the light of the heavenly kingdom, yet I know, as you know, that there is a light from these beatitudes, which is better for us than the light of that sun. Well may we pray for the coming of the kingdom of heaven—its fuller coming to each of us—its universal coming to our fellow-men.

“Thy will be done, as in heaven so on earth.”—Whose will? The will of the *Holy* Being. This is the only will that has a right to be done, either in heaven or on earth. All will that is not willful is an expression of *excellence*. Will is simply the actualization of being; willfulness is the attempt to actualize non-being. Willfulness is always and necessarily the antagonism of being. A willful teacher antagonizes the being of the pupil, and seeks to impose on that pupil a command which has originated in the teachers passion or ignorance, or both. We should never mistake a strong-willed man for a willful man, as we continually *do* mistake a willful man for a man of strong will. Will as will is simply force; will as enlightened is force directed, guided to wise and noble choice, will as holy is simply the energizing of a Holy Being.

To pray, that God’s will be done on earth as in heaven is to pray that His being be realized on earth. Let me return to the illustration of teacher and pupil. When this relation is as it ought to be, the teacher’s will is realized in the pupil, which is only saying the teacher’s self is realized in the pupil. Now, it is most important to observe that this is never accomplished by

what is known as force. Mere force never conquered a pupil. And by force God will never conquer man. There is another truth taught, as I think, by my illustration, which is of equal importance. The true teacher's realization of his will, that is, of himself in his pupil, is never the absorption or overthrow of his pupil's will, on the exact contrary, it is the strengthening and development of the will of the pupil. In like manner, God's will done in you and in me, *i. e.*, the realization of His holy nature in us, is the highest development of our best selves. A teacher who absorbs the pupil ruins the pupil, if God absorbs men He destroys them.

"Thy will be done." Most beautiful and excellent prayer! Thy will has declared Thy holy being in my body, my mind, and my heart. As Thou hast expressed thyself by me, I am truly Thy child, and my highest excellence is in this, that I can will Thee over again, and so create what Thou, oh God, didst not and couldst not create—my character. Realizing my best self, I realize Thee. My will—separate, strong, every way individual—does Thy will because its holiness and glory have won my love.

"*Give us, this day, our daily bread.*"—A petition distinctively from the manward side of our relation to the Father. Not only so—it is a petition primarily touching our physical necessities. Some have restricted this request to the bread of the Lord's Supper, while others have used it in a purely figurative way, as expressing desire for spiritual nourishment. I am not

concerned to maintain or deny either of these opinions, for I am not concerned to state exactly what was in the mind of Christ as He uttered these words. I will keep close to the physical meaning of the petition, not, however, for one moment implying that we are confined to such meaning and forbidden to use these words in supplication for *all* nourishment.

I find it a beautiful conception, this, of prayer for daily bread, physical nourishment, and I am especially glad to find the petition close joined to the one asking that God's will be done as in heaven so on earth. I never mourn over any misconception of philosophy or religion more sincerely than I do over the misconception respecting matter. If matter be not itself spirit, it is the dwelling place of spirit, and so far as we know or can infer, the *eternal* dwelling place of spirit. Not only so, the relation between matter and spirit in our own persons is one of reciprocal influence. We are so constituted that our highest intellectual and emotional life can not be secured without physical nourishment—bread—literal, physical bread. And yet this indisputable fact has been presented as one of degradation. Wholesome, pleasureable digestion has been a process for which thousands of professing Christians have felt called upon to apologize or to blush. And yet these same Christians would be obliged to acknowledge that the process of physical nourishment was appointed by their Lord and Maker, and by Him made *essential*—essential to the holiest living. When a saint has voluntarily starved himself to death, what has become of his sainthood? To ask

aright for daily bread implies more than, perhaps, we fully recognize; to ask aright for daily bread implies that we do our utmost to keep ourselves in condition to be nourished by the bread. A man who antagonizes the appointed relation between his body and his mind, and his morals, can not rightly ask for daily bread. Daily bread can not be given him—heap it up upon his platter—you have not given it to him, for he can not take it.

“Give us this day our daily bread” implies that we have so realized or are striving so to realize God’s holy will in our bodies, that the bread will produce the nourishment it was designed to produce. This is what I call honesty in prayer.

“And forgive our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors.”—I find very much in this petition, and sincerely hope you will share my finding. Remember, we have left the commentators, and are reading the Lord’s prayer in the light of daily experience. A debt, a due, something *owed* is not to *be* forgiven; it is to be paid, and this at the earliest possible moment. If the Greek word in our petition which is translated debt, be taken as Greek scholars authorize us to take it, viz.: to mean delinquency, fault, sin, the situation is nowise changed. Fault, delinquency, sin, *can not* be forgiven, as the word forgiven is ordinarily used. Do you suppose a holy God *can* overlook sin, even if He were to try His utmost? Can he be imagined as saying, “I will make no account of this sin?” For God to overlook sin, to make any compromise with it, would be to

make himself a sinner. From this interpretation of our necessary conception of God there is no escape. What, then, is forgiveness? It is a work so magnificent, so transcendent, that God alone can perfect it. It is divine love inducing the sinner to sin no more.

“Forgive us our debts, our faults, as we also have forgiven our debtors.” Have we any right to say to a man who owes us the truth and has given us a lie, I count it as nothing, I forgive you, never mind? We have no more right to say this than God has. We have a right, not only so, it is our duty, to say to him, there is no *personal* question here involved, it is not because you have given *me* a falsehood that I can not forgive you, it is because you have lied that no one anywhere can regard you as not having spoken falsely. I forgive you, it is not between us that the falsehood rests. I bring you sympathy and help to speak falsehoods no more. What think you of this conception of forgiveness? It eliminates the personal element between sinner and sinned against, and this is the only thing that, in my judgment, ought ever to *be* eliminated. I *can* forgive that, I *will* forgive that, if I am great enough, because *that* has no place, no rightful place, anywhere. To suppose that sin consists in the relation of an act to *me*, is most false and pitiable. God should not be thought of as angry at the sinner because He, God, has been insulted. Who, for one moment, would have so low an estimate of God? God’s anger is the opposition of His holy nature to all wrong. One of the most powerful chapters in the entire Bible is the eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel.

Hear its closing words: "Repent and turn from all your transgressions, so *iniquity* shall not be your *ruin*. Cast away from you all your transgressions and make you a new heart and a new spirit, for why will you die? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God. Wherefore turn yourselves and live ye."

"And forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors." Before we ask God's forgiveness, let us have bestowed the same forgiveness, in kind, that we ask at his hands. Let us take no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, no pleasure in the pain of him that suffereth. Let us bring a heart of loving forgiveness, which shall make our debtor know that the debt is not between him and ourselves, that we have gone behind it for his sake and will aid him to pay it to the last farthing. Such, and no other, is the forgiveness we have a right to ask from God. Is there any better forgiveness, any more worthy the name? Dare we ask a Holy Being to *cancel* our sins? Is sin a matter of book-keeping? I know no blasphemy greater than to ask God to treat us as though we had not sinned. How magnificent the thought that our Father who is in Heaven will, for the love he bears us, go behind our sins and aid us to turn from transgressions and *so* to live.

"*And bring us not into temptation.*"—There is a tempting to deceive and to ruin; there is a tempting to test and to approve, of the former the devil is the source, of the later, God. In tempting, in being

tempted, there is no sin ; in tempting to ruin there is sin at its worst ; in tempting to prove there may be love in its full tenderness. It is interesting to observe the attempts that have been made to avoid the simple, natural meaning of this petition. There were numerous Latin copies of the Lord's prayer circulating about 150 A. D., and most of these shaped our words as follows : "Suffer us not to be led into temptation," this because the actual leading of men into temptation ought not to be attributed to God. A very naive religious thinking this, when God had deliberately placed men in a world where temptation was inevitable. As matter of fact, this life of ours is as full of temptations as it is of minutes, and if there be a divine education of the human race, it is an education by trial and testing. Other words of Scripture doubtless come to your minds at this time—"God is not tempted of evil, neither tempteth He any man. A man is tempted where he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed." But this is plainly the temptation unto ruin of which no good being is or can be guilty. The last Scripture sentence I read is noteworthy, since it makes plain what is necessary to temptation, and also shows the time at which sin appears. I have said that there is nothing wrong in being tempted ; for a temptation to exist there must be an uprising of desire toward the person or thing tempting, there must be something in you that goes out toward the object. This is nowise wrong, and would not become so even if your going out of desire became painfully intense. It is when you are drawn away by a desire which you have

cherished until it became a lust, and so are enticed that you sin.

Still another difficulty has been thought to be connected with the prayer that God will not bring us into temptation. If God may and does rightfully tempt us, to test and approve, why should we deprecate such temptation? And what shall we say of the words, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations?" Here again, as I think, a very small and arbitrary measure has been resorted to to meet a difficulty that does not exist. A petty distinction has been drawn between "being led into temptation," and being "tempted." "Being led into temptation" means being brought under the power of a temptation greater than we can bear. *This* we have a right to deprecate. Being tempted is simply the testing above mentioned—against this we do not pray.

I am sometimes disposed to believe that one of the strongest evidences for the divine origin of the Bible is its survival from wretched exegesis. "Bring us not into temptation." Let us take these words in the plainest meaning as a petition against being tempted, against being tested, against being subjected to the trial which we will endeavor to meet when it does come, yet a trial which we can not but dread when we acknowledge an acquaintance with ourselves. Listen to these two prayers, and judge which of them is more in accord with the *facts* of the case:

"Our Father, tempt us; we are ready for Thee. Our virtue is established. Search us out. Lay thine afflictive hand upon us; we are Jobs, and will stand

fast in our integrity." "Our Father, lead us not into temptation. We are weak, and we fear lest we fall. We know ourselves all too well to seek temptation. Yet, if Thou judgest us worthy to be tried, we will not flee the testing; we will even count it all joy that Thou provest us with temptation."

"Lead us not into temptation!" Was there ever a more natural prayer for a man who knows himself to offer.

"*But deliver us from evil.*"—Free us, our Father, from all that which ought not to be—free us from evil within and evil without. Let me illustrate by a common physical experience. For months—for years, a disease, with insidious but ceaseless advances, has been undermining the foundations of your physical well being, an all-pervading wretchedness has come to pass within you, the disorder augments, and fever, pain, agony, delirium, unconsciousness ensue. You awake more helpless than a babe; your first consciousness is of distress gone, and then of the gentle stirrings of a new life. Not for years has *such* blessing been known—the blessing of health—oh, the luxury of the days. Stronger, stronger, freer from evil, and with the opening Spring you climb the hill-side a new man, born again unto unspeakable joy. What a faint, faint type of a soul freed from its evil—freed from the accursed undermining evil that spreads the wretchedness of its discontent over all your seeing, all your recollections, all your thoughts, all your feelings. Thank God if this discontent—discontent because you are not what

you ought to be and might be — has not mounted to the delirium of passion, and driven you to deeds of violence or deceit. Delivered from all *that* evil—able to be sincere—able to love truth for its own sake, to love beauty for its own sake—able to be filled with sympathy—able to rejoice in the light—able to *prefer* your integrity before all else in this universe. Who can state the luxury of freedom from the evil that is within—not a passive, empty separation—but to feel, as you lie back in the weakness of a hard-won victory, the stirrings of a new life within your soul—to feel love for purity, gentleness, peace, righteousness, moving within you, raising you up to front the world a fresh, clean soul. Is *that* worth a prayer? “*Deliver us from evil.*”

*Wisdom is the recognition and loving acceptance
of God in law.*

Our conception of prayer is determined by our conception of God. Our conception of God is all too often determined by our surroundings. Let us guard against error at this initial point. It is true to a degree that all our conceptions are shaped by the times and circumstances of our lives. Had we been Chinese we would not have been Americans, had we been Unitarians we would not have been Trinitarians, had we been Catholics we would not have been Presbyterians. For this determining influence of birth and environment we are not responsible. It is the promise and the result of all true education to beget culture, and culture represents the emancipation of man, as far as he can be emancipated, from the undue influence of his narrow environment. Education widens his surroundings and makes him a world citizen. He becomes now, and for the first time, a creator of his own conceptions, a creator, that is, to the fullest extent of which he is capable. He never can create ideas, the elements of which were not furnished by his own experience, nevertheless, he can and does create. His conceptions are not formed for him. He

works over the material which comes from without, and is not worked over by it. This is the proper and inevitable effect of education. A moment's reflection will show that the educative process tending to such issue is an uneven one, uneven, I mean, so far as a given family, community or people may be concerned. To this fact we may, in large measure, trace the bitter disagreements in families and communities respecting religion, morality and politics. The younger members of a family are developing under circumstances very different from those which surrounded the early years of their parents. Increasing care and anxiety turned the intellectual activity of the parents into practical channels, the toil of breadwinning left neither time nor strength for study or reflection. Not only so, this result happened at the most critical period of intellectual development, the period, viz.: of which I have spoken, when education would make man a creator of his own conceptions. The training which these parents received (I am supposing that it was proper training) was giving them the use of their minds, and in due time they would have become masters of their environment, forming their own conceptions of morality, religion and politics. This precisely they did become in matters of business and household affairs, if they rose at all above mediocrity and achieved any distinctive success. They thought for themselves in business, and while unable to escape from their environment here, they were not moulded by it into machines. They were often heretics in business ; in morality, religion and politics, however, they did not create their own con-

ceptions, but received them from the silent influence of their surroundings. Now, it is most noteworthy, though it lies in the very nature of the case, that they are more tenacious of these traditional, handed-over conceptions than they are of those which they formed for themselves in business affairs and daily life.

You will, I think, agree that we have laid our hand upon the source of a large part of the turmoil in families and communities, respecting religion, morality and politics. Parents can not view with anything but dread what seems to them a reckless abandonment by their children of fundamental truths. There is, as I believe, but one safeguard against this deplorable situation—it is the safeguard of education, differently conducted at or near its beginnings. The time must come when direct and purposed effort will be made to teach children the right use of reason, and to develop within them right feelings.

Consider the bearing of these thoughts upon our present subject. I said that our conception of prayer was determined by our conception of God, and that our conception of God is all too often determined by our surroundings. It will, I trust, now be evident in what sense our conception of God must be determined by our surroundings, and in what sense we must be its creators. First of all we are *human* beings, and can have no God-idea which is extra-human. We have not the least concern with what other beings, above or below us, may or may not think of God. We are obliged to make our own God; do not let me be misunderstood, I said *our own* God. God Himself we

do not make; do we make the mountain or the sea; do we make our ideas of mountain and sea? Are our ideas of mountain and sea any wise different from those held by the earth inhabitants in the days of Homer? There are two fixed quantities in this whole matter; one is external, the other internal; one is the universe and the other is our own constitution; these we do not create. They determine us; yet out of them and in keeping with them we create and ought to create our God-ideas. This is precisely what sincere thinking men have done from the beginning until now, and they have given us, each in his time, the best God-idea of which they were capable. This is part of our heritage of *our* environment, which we should use in our creative work. Has the course of things been anywise different in science or history? Science is man's creation of his world—his universe. What has he worked with in this creative undertaking? He has worked with his own constitution of sense and reason and with his environment. Did he create either—has he altered either by the least fraction? Yet he has created a new world for us many times over during the centuries. Not only so, he has created a world in one age which was the outright contradictory of the world preceding, and the equally flat contradictory of the world created by His enlightened successors. Why should we expect a different state of things with regard to religion? Do I hear some one answer, because God has declared Himself once for all in the Holy Scripture. But do you not know that the God-idea gathered from that Scripture was gathered

by men, and by them put into the so-called creeds of Christendom. The Catholic Church is undeniably the most logical religious organization that has appeared in human history. That church claimed to have not only the inspired word of God, but an inspired interpretation of that word. Has Protestantism admitted that claim? It has most emphatically denied it and taken the consequences; that is to say, taken as many Bibles as there were sects and theologians to interpret. The churches have created their own Bibles, and each man should be the creator of his own Bible. *His* Bible is not that printed Book any more than the scientist's world of Descarte's time was the world of Nature. His Bible is just so much of that divine Book as he has taken up into his mind and heart and made for himself. He must create his own Bible; without altering a word on the printed page, he must tell what that Book means to him. He must not allow minister or church or council to make his Bible, unless, as a sincere Catholic, he believes in the God-bestowed authority of that church to do such important work. What is true of the Bible is equally true of God. Shall we allow any one to make our God for us? Have we a right to any God except the one we have made? Can we pray to some other person's God? A humble, pure-hearted woman kneels in prayer, the skies over her small horizon are very dark, the struggle of life—her narrow, burdened life—is becoming unbearable. Her pure heart cries, "help me, oh God, I perish." The heavens, *her* heavens, open and she hears a voice saying, "be of good cheer; I once lived through a

darker night in Gethsemane's shade; I love you; I lift you up," and Jesus, *her* Jesus touches her. There is her creation made out of her life-blood, and the Bible, as she reads it, *her* Bible. Now, I say there is more reality there than in the church-goer who has never had a Bible or created a prayer. Owned Bibles? Yes. Had a Bible? No, never. Said prayers? Yes. Prayed? Never. Ah, friends, all that is worth the doing we must do for ourselves, all the God and all the Bible worth having we must make for ourselves, make them out of the constitution of our souls and out of the experiences of our lives. Do you not see plainly the character of my present undertaking. I am concerned to declare that conception of God — that God-idea which is, as I believe, necessitated by our human constitution and our experience, I am not concerned to force this conception upon you, but to commend it to you as one by the help of which you, too, may have a God — precious beyond expression, the God of *your* mind and *your* heart and *your* life.

The highest being of which we can conceive is a self-conscious, intelligent, and holy being. It is plain that our God-idea should be the highest we are capable of forming. God is a term universally admitted to be the symbol of the highest. What is *our* highest? *i. e.*, What is *our* God, not the angels' God, or the animals' God, or the may-be God, but our God, the God we are constrained by our nature to conceive? We are wont to say that living matter is a higher reality than non-living matter, and we also say that conscious beings, even the least of them, are superior to the un-

conscious, so that the butterfly is more to us than the fixed plant on which it alights. Why is man the chiefest of beings on this earth? Because in him consciousness is at its highest. Reason, conscience, volition, and nothing else, engirdle the world for him and trace the unerring courses of the stars.

Now, it is a stultification of *our* reason to say that *our* God is other than, and higher than, consciousness. For us He *must* mean an intelligence that knows us and knows the universe. We are utterly unable to conceive a being higher than self-conscious perfection. Remember, I am not concerned to offer proof that there *is* a God; I am deeply concerned to show what those ought to mean and must mean who *believe* there is a God. Mr. Herbert Spencer has taken here, as I think, one of the most suicidal positions possible to a reasoning being—and Mr. Spencer is certainly a man of large reason. He says: "It is true that we are *totally* unable to conceive of any higher mode of being than intelligence and will." In the very next sentence he says: "This is not a reason for questioning its existence—it is rather the reverse. Does it not follow that the ultimate cause can not, *in any respect*, be conceived by us, because it is, in every respect, greater than can be conceived?"

Mr. Spencer's influence over the younger generation of students and readers has been larger than it is, but it is still large. He is the intellectual guide of many; there are hundreds in our country, to-day, who do not venture to approach God in prayer as a personal, self-conscious being, because Mr. Spencer has made them

believe that to do so would belittle God, who is vastly greater than our necessary conception of Him. A person must journey a long distance through the devious paths of controversy to meet such abuse of reason as presents itself in the teaching above set forth. If reason is to be our guide, shall we follow reason? If reason is to be our *only* guide, what other guide shall we follow? If I say, because I can not help myself, that all metals have a certain atomic weight, ductility, and luster, what would you do with a chemist who should stand up in front of me and reply, "It is true you can not think of metals in any other way, but you must not *call* metals ductile, lustrous, and of a certain weight, because you do not know, and can not know, how much *more* they are?" You would deposit that chemist in Longview, and you would not let him come out until he was intelligent enough to sign this paper: "I hereby acknowledge that I was a fool. Reason being my sole guide, I will hereafter follow reason alone, and the metal I believe in shall be the metal my reason shuts me up to."

I say, therefore, that reason, in its strictest exercise, brings us, if we are to pray at all, to a self-conscious, holy intelligence. It is none of our intellectual business what else God may be, or has been, or is, or will be; for us He is self-conscious and holy. This is so far a justification and appropriation by reason of the words "Our Father," which begin the Lord's prayer. *Our* God is *like* us, and we do not propose to have any other beings God—animal, devil, angel, or archangel. Since our idea of prayer must be determined

by our idea of God, and since our idea of God inevitably contains within it holy intelligence, we ask whether there are other determining thoughts growing out of such God-idea, and what is their shaping force upon an understanding of prayer? There are such ideas, and the most fundamental of them is the idea of *Law*. If such a being exist as our conception of God demands, there has never been a single law made by God, and there never can be a law made by God, neither can a law be changed to so much as a fraction by the omnipotence of God. Prayer, therefore, need not address itself to the changing of law. I fear this will seem very shocking doctrine and thoroughly destructive of prayer. I have said, prayer, therefore, need not address itself to the changing of law. Let me read my sentence in this wise: Prayer, therefore, need not address itself to the changing of God. The two sentences mean exactly the same thing for a believer in God. God is the best being—what would become of Him if He were to change His nature in the slightest degree? Think of the monstrosity of a prayer that *wishes* to change God—to say nothing of the foolishness of such a prayer.

Let us test this as we do all our shocking statements by experience. Let us say to a bar of iron, "I want you to hold fast your molecular tenacity while I am using you to couple a train of cars; but when you fall on my feet I want you to become feathers." Let us say that to the all-knowing intelligence from whom iron came, as the Christian believes. Nay, let us wring our hands and get down on our knees and offer

such petition—we will have insulted God in our prayer. If God be the author of iron, iron is a transcript of the thought of God; and what we call the laws of iron, *i. e.*, ways in which it persistently manifests itself to us, are ways of the divine being, and who wishes by his prayer, or ought to wish, to remake God?

A right conception of law springs from a right conception of God, and a right conception of law glorifies God and glorifies prayer, and deepens the meaning of life. I say a right conception of law glorifies God. Law—physical, intellectual, moral—is an expression of God's being. He did not determine to have a decalogue, and so make it out of nothing. If the ten commandments came from God—they came from God—they are revelations of His being. If this universe came from God, it came from *God*, and is a transcript of His nature. It is only when we extend our necessary conception of God to His world and His laws that we glorify him with the highest thought of which we are capable. It is in this way, and in this way only, that all the attributes we ascribe to God are purified of their grossness. Divine anger is not some one angry, some one raging furiously against a finite creature who has dared to disobey the Almighty's commands. Is not your God above such pitiable business? Divine anger is the necessary opposition between right and wrong—a right being and a wrong being, a holy being and an unholy being. Is not that anger enough? The other can expend itself and have done, this can never expend itself and never have done. There is only one

way to be reconciled with God, and that is to stop sinning.

Divine punishment is, by the conception of God we are here urging, entirely freed from arbitrary character, and raised to divine dignity as God realizing himself; infinite blessing, if we will have it so, infinite pain, if we will not. Why do we so continually fail to realize what it means to say God is the *source* of all? We thrust our hand into the fire and pray to escape the consequences. That fire is God. How beneficent, how comforting, how strengthening, when used rightly. And what does this mean—when used rightly? It means used as *God*, not as God *ordered*, *commanded*, but as *God*. Ah, the God-idea, even as we finite creatures are compelled to make it, is large enough to keep us thinking and feeling to our utmost. The fire is God—His *thought*—therefore, God, *His* thought, therefore, the *best*. What a world this is, if it be indeed the world of God, as the Christian believes? With what grand solemnity is life filled by this conception—a human being entered on an endless career as the child of God in a universe of God! The laws of nature are modes of an all-wise and an all-holy being, better laws could not have been, can not be, for they are *God*. Behold how this conception of divine law rectifies and solemnizes the conception of punishment here and hereafter. Behold how it fills out with meaning these words from the mighty chapter of Ezekiel: “Cast away from you all your transgressions, and make you a new heart and a new spirit, for why will ye die?” The entire universe of God as God, is crying out by

everyone of its laws, great and small, "Turn ye! Turn ye! Why will ye die?" Punishment—as though God attaches a punishment to your act which He could withhold! It is His glory and His omnipotence that He can not withhold penalty. I, a finite, imperfect being, may *make* a law and tie on a penalty—this penalty I can untie, and will, perhaps, if you pay me enough. He, the infinite, makes no law — He *is* law ; He *attaches* no penalty — *is* penalty.

If we believe in immortality we believe that we have already entered upon an eternal living, or an eternal dying. Endless punishment — can that be? Endless sinning — can *that* be? If the latter, then the former. As long as you hold your hand in the fire the hand will burn—one hour, a month, a year, ten million years; wherever, and as long as, you sin you will suffer.

Will you make for yourselves, as your God, a holy, self-conscious intelligence? Will you make, as your God, a *Heavenly Father*? Will you find in His perfect nature the source of all that is? Will you not then say that all that is *ought* to be since it also is God — His thought, His power, His wisdom? Will you not say all that is *must* be, sin alone excepted?

*Wisdom is the recognition and loving acceptance
of God in law.*

Angelo had finished upon the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel his picture of Eve. He was looking at his own creation. Clambering up upon the scaffolding came an art critic. In the audacity of his littleness he drew near and said: "Change the position of that arm; deepen this shading; give another color to the eyes." Still looking upon his handiwork, Angelo said: "I can not." "Oh, yes, it is easy; I will show you how," replied the critic, his audacity being now full grown. Then the artist arose from the plank on which he had been lying, and with lightning in his eyes and thunder in his voice, he drove the little fellow out of his presence. The Italian night was falling as Angelo lay down and looked again upon the work of his hands; the most beautiful, the most perfect, woman it has been given any man to symbolize.

"Oh, God," he cried; "they would have me change the form and the color, but I can not. Knowest thou not, oh God, that I can not change this symbol of Thy creative work. It is myself, my mind and my heart and my hand are there. Had I more to give, or better to give, thou knowest I would give it. My best is

there." Angelo, rugged, gloomy man, towers up among the great. What would it have been for him to change that creation on the ceiling? It would have been the degradation of falsehood. To his own self he could not be true and alter one particle of his work. Let us say that Angelo was, as many have named him, the supreme artist. Is it not clear that by just so much as he was more than others, it was impossible, literally impossible, for him to change his creation? He, at his best, produced the best; can the best be changed? So I have sought to identify God with his works. Angelo was apart and distinct from the woman, and yet so truly was she his very self, that he *could* not change her without self-destruction. I have said, with the utmost emphasis of which I am capable, that the highest conception of God we can form is of self-conscious and holy intelligence. Here is no pantheism. The stone is not self-conscious or intelligent, neither is iron, neither is that Eve who looks down the centuries from the Sistine ceiling. But as we know that glorious woman could not have been changed by Angelo, and can not be changed by any man, because she *is* the heart and mind of the greatest artist, so we know that iron and stone and star can not be changed, because they are the thought of *God*. A greater than Angelo might change his Eve, and a greater than God might change His iron or His world.

I am, indeed, deeply anxious that this conception of God and the consequent conception of law should commend themselves to your judgment. It is often a reproach against the Christian God-idea that it is

nothing but that of an enlarged man. A man's God must, indeed, be *his* God, not such as a different order of being would make, therefore have I pled so earnestly that we acknowledge our obligation to think as *men*, as the constitution of our being makes necessary. Let us then see well to it that in forming our idea of God we bring forth the best of which we are capable. To show that it is this alone I have sought, I will recur to the earthly parental relation. What do we mean by a willful parent? We mean one who speaks in this wise: "*I told you to do that—you disobeyed me—how dared you disobey me; understand henceforth, my will is your law; break it and I will whip you into subjection.*" What is *the* radical defect here? It is the blind assertion of the *pure, naked self*. The parents *self* is insulted by the child's disobedience. What, on the other hand, do we mean by a just and loving parent? We mean one who speaks in this wise: "My child, I require you to do this thing because I love you so much." The child answers, "Father, how can you love me when you pain me?" And the father says, "It is not I who pain you, it is you who pain yourself, I have simply told you what must be done if you would live and not suffer; it is because I *know* this, and because I love you so much that I compel your obedience." Consider carefully the full excellence of this parent; it is the utter absence of that blind assertion of pure, naked self—the self of the parent is swallowed up by truth and love. This parent has seen and stated the immutable modes of his child's being. It is not against the

parent that the child has sinned, but against himself—he has thrust his hand into fire. Am I not seeking the purest and truest conceptions? Is not the beauty, is not the life of the parental relation found in that love which puts self out of sight, out of thought, and discerning the being of the child, aids in its realization? But the earthly parent is not the *source* of law, he is its discoverer. Rise now to the conception of a heavenly parent, a *perfect* parent. He *is* the source of law—He is not its discover or its maker, He is its *revealer*. As our nature enlarges by the growth of knowledge and the deepening of feeling, self in its hideous nakedness is no more; a gloriful self emerges whose sole mission is to realize God.

Can you name a grander conception in the possession of the human mind than this of a divine universe? God manifested everywhere in power, in wisdom, and in love. This the Christian professes to believe—let him enter into the full measure of his belief. Let him say, without hesitation, Thou art from everlasting to everlasting *God*—unchangeable, because the *best*, and *all* Thy works are Thee. Law, therefore, whether physical, intellectual, or moral, is a transcript of the *nature* of God, and any prayer that prays for the abrogation of law prays for the abrogation of God. To say that God can not change His law is the same as to say that God can not change himself. To say that God can not forgive sin, in the sense of disregarding it, or in the sense of withholding its consequences, is the same as to say that God can not forswear himself. And now I have drawn near what is regarded as

the cardinal doctrine of the Christian faith, the atoning work of Christ. It is believed by Christians that God for Christ's sake forgives men their sins. Let it be clearly understood that I am not here for the purpose of urging this doctrine upon any one of you. I am concerned to show what, in my opinion, this teaching should mean for all who accept it. Every one before me knows full well that the doctrine of the atonement, as it is called, has subjected Christianity to more severe criticism than any other in the creed. That God should be represented as forgiving a sinner because an innocent being voluntarily endured crucifixion is to many sincere men a slander upon the Almighty. To say that an innocent being can take upon himself a sinner's sin appears to many an outright falsehood. Only a sinner is a sinner, and no one could get his sins if he tried—they are the individual's personal property, and so personal that he could not give them up to another by any conceivable endeavor. But there is said to be a further difficulty of equal, or even greater, magnitude. If any innocent being could carry sins without being a sinner he has no right to do so. To regard an innocent being as guilty is itself the height of iniquity. To represent God as appeased by innocent blood, and willing to save only those who believe this, is judged by many sincere minds to be blasphemy.

I have endeavored to state the objectors position in the strongest possible manner, and I ask, with all earnestness, has the believer in the atonement no other reply than is covered by the words, "You must have

faith. Pray God that He will give you faith in spite of your reason." Are we to be forever told that faith, which is one of the commonest realities of daily life, a reality without which human affairs could not continue one hour, is the contradiction of reason? Is man a being of such inner schism that one part of his nature impels in one direction and the other in the opposite direction? If the Christian religion has less hold to-day upon the thinking minds of the world than in previous years, is it solely because thought and culture and learning are anti-Christian? Is the honest training of a man's mind the sure source of unbelief? Have men grown indifferent, as the minister complains, to moral and religious questions? Do we not know that there was never a time when these subjects were more earnestly inquired into than at the present day? Infinite pains *have* been taken, are *being* taken, to get at the facts respecting man's moral and religious history, that light may be thrown on his moral and religious nature. And how his consciousness has been studied, is being studied, in all its phases, from the cradle to the grave. How facts, undreamed of by the wildest imagination, are laid open to view, and marvels presented to our vision that were laughed to scorn by men of science a few years since. If Christianity turn her back upon facts, she is doomed. If Christianity is to be explained by its history, and not by its possession of eternal truths—truths that no after-facts can reverse—let Christianity go—its day is over. Consider the immense extension of mathematical science since the days of the Greeks.

So vast and thorough has been this extension as to convince many of our greatest mathematicians that their science is the key to the constitution of matter, and that all knowledge is in essence mathematical. Consider, and it is surely a momentous consideration, that *not one principle* discovered by the Greek mathematicians has been reversed by all this subsequent advance. Does not our recent study of the Beatitudes assure us that their truths are beyond the corroding touch of time? Will they ever grow old? Do they not mean more to us as our experience broadens and deepens? I plead for the application of Christianity to the human life of this century; I plead for the application of Christianity to every fact in our manifold nature; I plead for a rational Christianity; I plead for a religious feeling so powerful that it shall make of us all citizens of a heavenly kingdom here in this university and in the life that now is. I know that men are held to right courses by their affections, and I know that these affections must be nourished by truth. Return we now to what is called the atoning work of Christ in the light of our conception of God and law. Let us ask, with all earnestness and openness of spirit, whether forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake does not receive a new and deep meaning from our previous thinking?

God is the Best Being, therefore His laws are Himself, therefore they must prevail, must be obeyed or disaster follow. Man has broken these laws, has opposed the Best Being, therefore he has suffered, suffers, and will suffer until he returns to God, *i. e.*, to

the Best. God is love. Love is the glory of perfection. As we become better we love more—love all that is. God loves men who have sinned; their sin consists in turning away from the Best, therefore they suffer. Christ is the expression of this love of God for the sinner. Behold the depth of meaning in these words for the sincere believer. Christ raised up sinning humanity. How? By His obedience. Obedience to what? To law. Whose law? The law of *God*. Christian people regard Christ as sinless. And what does *this* mean? It means that one man—for all Christians assert the humanity of Christ—kept the law of God. In Christ, therefore, there is a perfected humanity. What, then, is salvation through Christ? Becoming *Christlike*. And this? A return to God. And this? Keeping His laws. And this? Keeping God. Now, I submit that here is atonement, and that these words take on new meaning, "There is therefore now no condemnation for them that are in Christ Jesus, for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death." It follows that salvation through Christ is something more than joining a church, however orthodox or heterodox. Salvation through Christ means nothing else or less than so dwelling with Him that you are thereby enabled to do what He did—obey—keep, realize the being of God. Who can return to God or be returned to God except he first become like God? God is good? The Good One? Then a return to God is a return to good. If Christ save men, He saves them by enabling them to begin to be good, and this

means to keep God's law, and this means to live in body, mind and soul as these are in their essential nature.

I would magnify for the Christian the work of Christ as I would magnify the conception of God and His law. I do not believe that any man, woman, or child has a right to say I am saved by the death of Christ, unless by an appropriation of Christ's character, the life of obedience to holy law has been truly commenced. Christianity is not a scheme for avoiding the consequences of sin, it is not an arrangement between God and Christ, by which so much innocent suffering is placed to the sinner's credit. How belittling such a conception? How magnificent that other conception of God and Christ and the rescued soul, which makes them all co-workers for immutable right! God's forgiveness of man's sins through Christ means something when it signifies a deliverance from sin, which Christ enables man to accomplish in his own nature. Reflect, my friend, that no other deliverance is possible. God can not deliver you from sin except by helping you to deliver yourself. For, what is sin? Primarily, and in essence, a state of heart. And, notice, always a state of heart which *you* produced. If you did *not* produce it, you did not sin. How, then, about its opposite, a state of righteousness? Who makes or can make *that*? *You* and you alone. You can not put *on* Christ's righteousness as a man putteth on a garment, you must put in Christ's righteousness by your own will, you must free yourself from the law of sin and death by obeying the law of God, which is life.

We have completed a careful testing of the Beatitudes by our own daily experience, and have we not found that those utterances announced the highest conceivable human character? If the heavenly citizen is gentle, pure-hearted, a worker of peace, do you imagine that the redeemed man is any less? Is the blood of Christ to take the place with God of pure-heartedness? Is the death of Christ to take the place with God of hunger and thirst for righteousness?

Grand, indeed, is that redemption of the sinner which results in changed affections.

But our presentations have imperiled the miracle. If law, as the revelation of a Holy Perfect Being, be as unchangeable as He, what becomes of the miracle? It is most unfortunate that the use of the word miracle has been such as to fasten attention more upon the *strangeness* of an event than upon its *signality*. The miracle, as presented in the Bible, is an attestation of authority, and the strangeness in the event called miraculous, was simply one of the features about it which gave it this attestation-character. This is the real significance of the *strangeness* in the miracle. If now we accept the conception of God and of law, which I have endeavored to commend, there still is in *every* event a strangeness which makes it a sign of divine power, *i. e.*, to say a miracle. Not one of the so-called *familiar* things but leads to infinity, and is so inscrutable as to attest an infinite power. What possible difference does it make *how* an event called miraculous is produced, provided we accept its attestation-character? Many persons have, as I believe, use-

lessly perplexed themselves about the *way* in which a miracle was wrought. Some have regarded it as a result of "a provision made in the original scheme of the universe, by which the occurrence was to take place at a given moment," others, "as the result of the interference of some higher law with subordinate laws." During these Bible studies I have repeatedly had occasion to point out that the most important was neglected for the relatively unimportant. This mistake again appears in the treatment of miracle—the most important thing in the miracle is its attestation of God, it is comparatively a matter of no consequence in what way the miracle was occasioned, yet, precisely this second consideration has been the weighty one with most persons.

And now comes in full application to the present subject, our conception of God as infinite intelligence. Holding resolutely to the conviction that God, as the best Being, is unchangeable, and that His laws, as expressions of His nature, are immutable as that nature, we insist that our knowledge of God's nature is a *fragmentary* affair.

If one conviction more than another possess the thoughtful student of nature to-day, it is this of the finiteness, the incompleteness of his knowledge. What he has been wont to call the necessities of nature have turned out repeatedly to mean nothing more than the temporary limits of his experimentation. I read to students in logic the unqualified statement of one of the highest scientific authorities, that no one is justified in saying the dead *can not* be raised to life, water

can not be turned to wine or that arsenic *must* cause death.

To say that God is unchangeable, and that all expressions of Him are equally unchangeable, is not to say that our *acquaintance* with these expressions is unalterable. That acquaintance has been so changed within the last half century, that a new world meets us on every hand. If there be a God, and if this be His world, it partakes of His infinity. Let us beware of confounding our petty knowledge of nature with nature herself. Is not God omnipotent? Does not this, His, world partake of His omnipotence? To pray for a reversal of natural law is to pray *against* God, and a mercy it is that such prayer can not be granted.

To pray that we may more and more see God everywhere—more and more realize His holiness, His love, and His power—this is to enter into the luxury of prayer, its unspeakable blessedness.

"If it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

Most natural petition of every human heart. We turn from pain, how much more from the pain that seems destructive. To drink of the cup seems necessary, yet to drink seems death. We come before our Heavenly Father and plead that the cup may pass. As we pray we know that there may be a far better, diviner, more glorious thing for us than the passing of the cup. How sweet, how inexpressibly precious that faith which, seeing God, the Loving Father, in *everything*, sees Him also *in the cup*. For that cup to pass is for God to pass. How transcendent the glory of that faith which can draw near to God in the darkness, the darkness of inexorable law, saying, 'Thou, oh God, art law, *all, therefore*, is well.

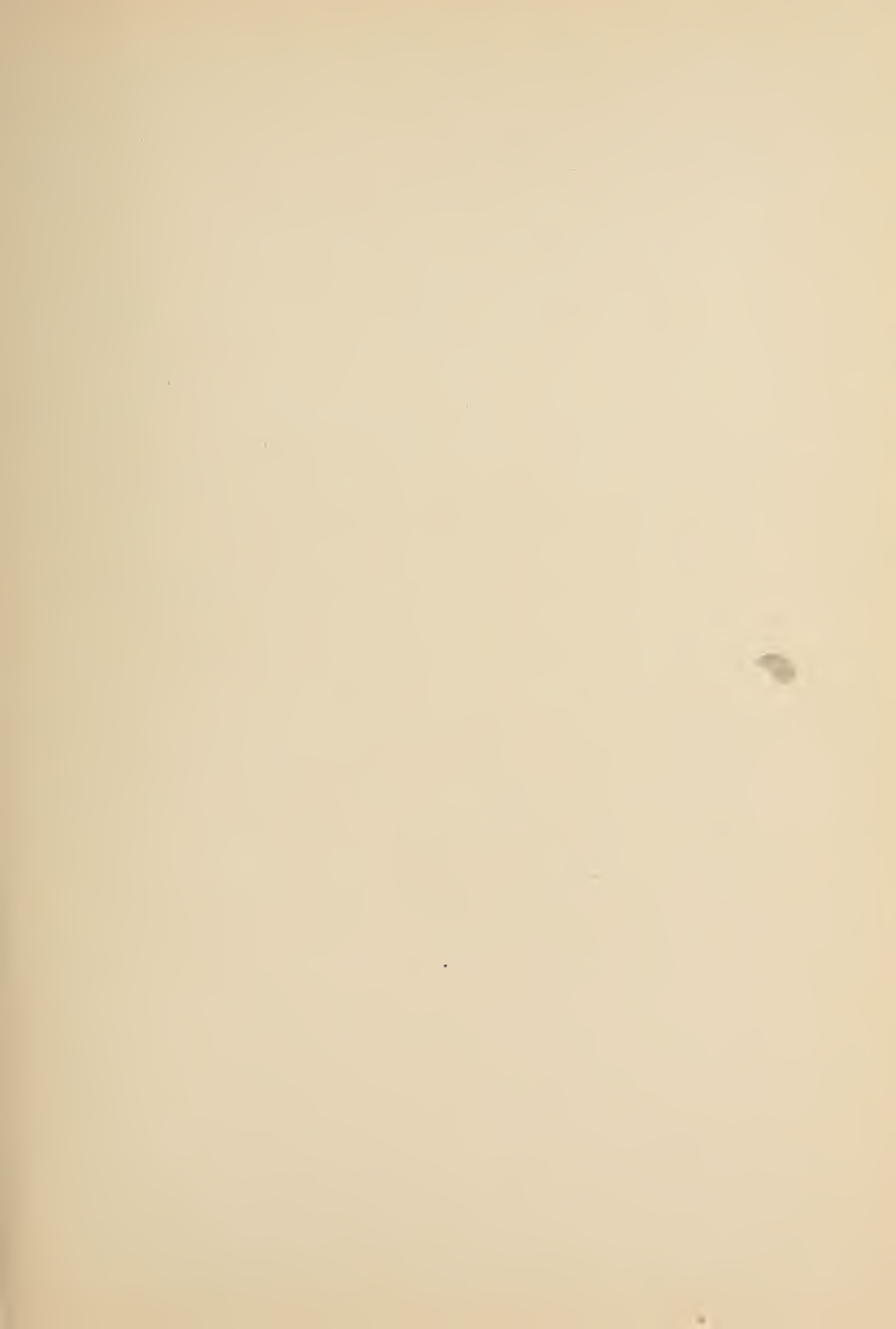
"If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." I will talk with Thee, oh my Father, as friend talketh with friend; I will plead with Thee, for my heart is sore distressed. Call me by name, Heavenly Father, that I may be sure Thou knowest me, even me, and not another. Behold, how bitter this cup is for me. I have drank of the cup daily; how long, how long! I have no hope, dear Father. The days are fetters, and the nights without rest. Help me! Take away the cup!

Father, what is this that comes upon me? Is it Thy spirit? I am pressed about as never before. Art Thou touching me? Art Thou here in the darkness? I thought I was alone. Am I Thy child? The fetters, are they Thy arms? Art Thou holding me by Thy law? Oh God, are all things working together for me—for me, that I may come to the full stature of my being? Hast Thou seen me all these years that I have lain upon my couch of pain? Didst Thou hear me when I cursed the day wherein I was born and begged for death?

Merciful Father, what would have become of me had I died in those times of despair. And the cup is thine—given to me because Thou lovest me and knowest what the end shall be.

I am tired, dear Father, let me rest on Thee. How tender the grass on which I lie—is it—is it Thy bosom? How protecting the trees above? How pure and sweet the wide sky—are they Thee? And the cup—the bitter, bitter cup, is it also Thee? Do I drink life in death?

Father, I thank Thee for this hour of prayer. Never do I so enter into the meaning of life as when I talk with Thee. Hold fast the world. Hold fast the infinite universe, oh God, and let me find Thee in it more and more without end.







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